

Buddy and me
Philip Norman on
his teenage love
Magazine



Polly Toynbee
The battle of Harriet
and Barbara
Page 15



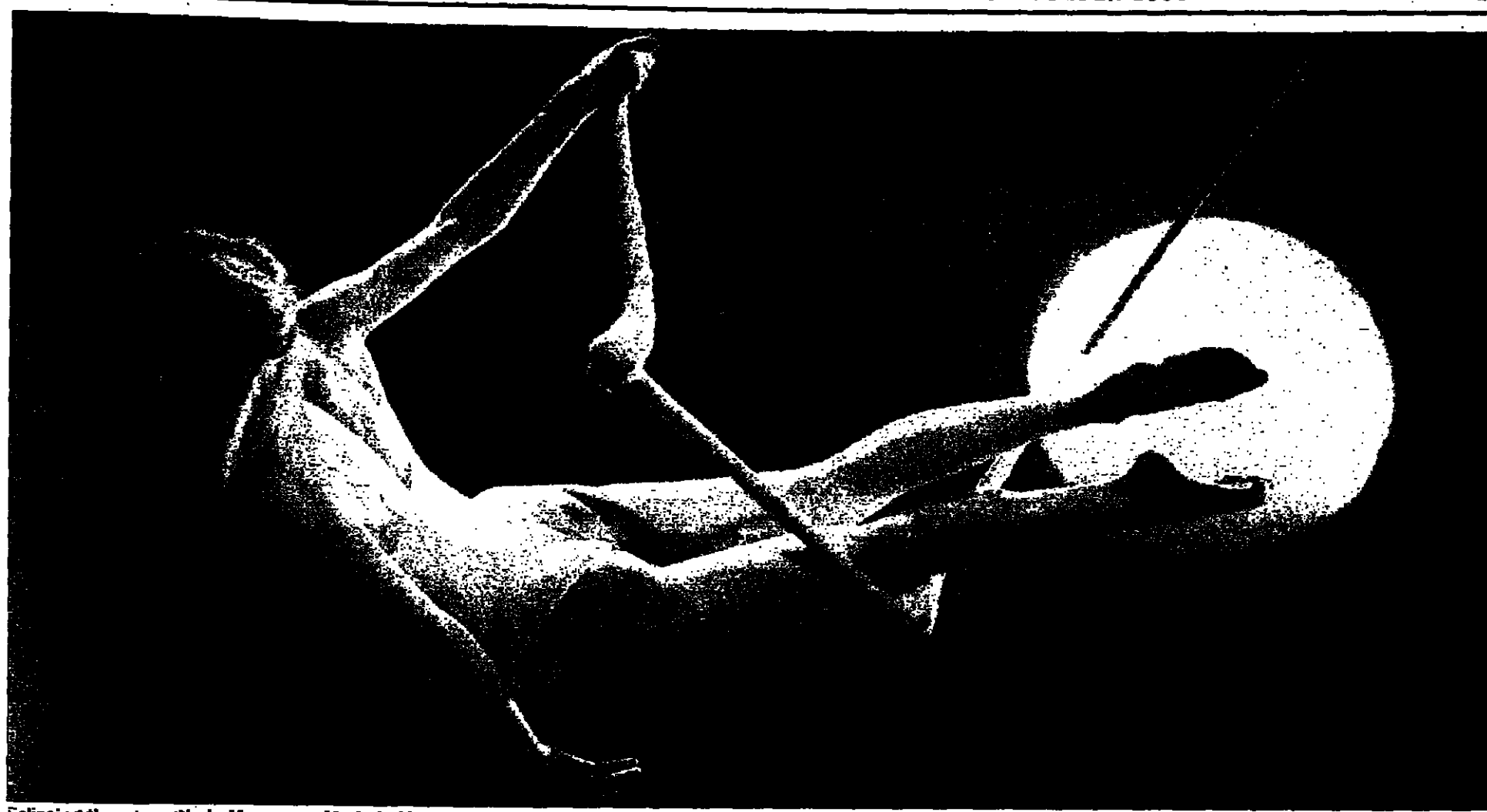
THE INDEPENDENT

3.103

SATURDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 1996

WEATHER Sunny spells, light winds

50p UK 65p



Eclipsing the moon: Nuria Moreno as Maria in Lindsay Kemp's new musical *Variété*, which opens at the Hackney Empire, in London, on Monday

Photograph: Laurie Lewis

Israel unrepentant after killings at Muslim shrine

Patrick Cockburn
in Jerusalem

Israeli soldiers killed three Palestinians and wounded 50 when they opened fire on worshippers at al-Aqsa, the third holiest Muslim shrine, in Jerusalem yesterday in a shooting sure to fuel violence in the West Bank and Gaza.

The incident at the end of Friday prayers ended hopes that fighting which flared between Israelis and Palestinians on Thursday might die away. In other incidents six Palestinians and two Israeli border policemen were killed.

The shooting on Temple Mount started when several thousand Israeli police and soldiers who had been stationed in and around the gates of the compound opened fire, saying that Palestinians were throwing stones at Jews worshipping at the Western Wall on which the al-Aqsa mosque sits.

"Most of us were praying inside the mosque itself so we did not know what was happening when the firing started," said Khalil Abed Rabbo, a Palestinian journalist. "The crowd was not very big and most of them were old people or women because the Israeli troops had not allowed Palestinian young men to reach al-Aqsa."

Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, accused Israeli police of attacking the worshippers in Jerusalem, despite what he said were late-night telephone assurances by Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, that he was interested in trying to cool the situation in the city.

"What is going on is against what we had agreed upon last night," Mr Arafat said. "The attack against the worshippers inside the mosque is something we cannot accept."

News of the Jerusalem confrontation - in which police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at

stone throwers - triggered fresh gun battles between Palestinian police and Israeli troops in West Bank and Gaza.

In one of the worst clashes, Israeli helicopter gunships fired

Palestinians. Six Israeli soldiers, including a senior officer, were reported wounded.

The battles signalled that Mr Arafat's control over his angry people, and especially over

Inside

'Under Netanyahu's leadership Israel is being dragged again and again into impulsive and irresponsible actions. It is humiliating the Palestinians and treating them with contempt... Netanyahu today represents all that is arrogant and belligerent in Israeli politics - those very traits we had just begun to recover from'

Novelist's lament: David Grossman, Page 15

Israel on the brink, pages 8,9;
Leading article, page 13

at Palestinian gunmen in the southern Gaza Strip, and Israel radio said tanks were surrounding the area. Israel radio said shots were being fired from Egyptian territory, apparently by

the 30,000 armed men under his control, was slipping away.

Sources close to Mr Arafat said that after the latest fighting, the Palestinian leader issued fresh orders to all commanders

to stop any attacks on Israelis, if necessary by force. Throughout the day, Arafat's Voice of Palestine had been broadcasting appeals for calm, but tens of thousands took to the streets anyway, marched toward Israeli positions and hurled stones.

At a combative news conference, Mr Netanyahu blamed Mr Arafat for the violence. The Likud leader was unrepentant about his decision to open the archaeological tunnel that runs beneath the Walling Wall, the Herodian retaining wall of the Second Temple, now Islam's third holiest site, and repeated his contention that Mr Arafat "cynically" used the tunnel as an excuse to stir up Arab passions against Israel and force his government into peace concessions.

Attending a tense meeting of the United Nations Security Council, the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, yesterday spearheaded criticism of Israel

over the unrest in Gaza and on the West Bank, laying the blame on the Israeli government and urging it to take concrete steps to defuse the crisis.

Mr Rifkind told the session that the violence had been "predictable". He said Israel should take four initiatives to prove its commitment to the peace process, including the closing, temporarily at least, of the tourist tunnel alongside Jerusalem's Temple Mount.

Speaking to *The Independent*, Marwan Barghout, a senior lieutenant of Yasser Arafat, said Israel can expect a wave of suicide bomb attacks in revenge for the deaths of some 50 Palestinians at the hands of the Israeli army and police.

He said that it was almost inevitable that Hamas, whose suicide bombs killed 58 people in Israel earlier this year would make more suicide attacks in order "to get the support of the people" by capitalising on Palestinian anger.

BBC plans eight pay channels

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

The BBC last night confirmed plans to launch eight pay-TV channels in the United Kingdom next summer, as part of its high-stakes bid to develop the corporation into a global television company.

The new channels, including high-brow arts and culture, documentaries, lifestyle, sports and entertainment, will be developed as a £200m joint venture with Flextech, the UK cable and satellite company controlled by United States media baron John Malone's TCI.

The BBC also plans to work with TCI's US associate, Discovery, to develop channels in the US, in a separate deal worth up to \$500m (£325m). In each case, the BBC would contribute programming but invest no money.

The news will be a huge disappointment to BSkyB, Rupert Murdoch's satellite giant, which had been eager to do its own channel development deal with the BBC. But a BBC source said an agreement with Mr Murdoch, who dominates the UK pay-television market, would have been "politically and strategically impossible".

All the same, the channels, which the BBC said would be made available to satellite and cable viewers, could still be distributed as part of BSkyB's existing multi-channel package, depending on the outcome of talks in coming months.

Roger Luard, chief executive of Flextech, said: "I think BSkyB is likely to be interested in carrying the new services."

The channels could be highly lucrative, depending on the number of viewers who agree to pay subscription fees. The BBC has already made notional capital gains of about £20m from its stake in UK Gold, the nostalgia pay-TV channel it shares with Pearson, Flextech and other media companies.

In separate negotiations, not yet completed, Flextech is also planning to buy out other shareholders in UK Gold. As a result, Pearson and Cox Communications of Atlanta would take non-voting stakes in Flextech.

"Both Flextech and Discovery have successful track records in the development of subscription channels," Bob Phillips, chief executive of BBC Worldwide, the Corporation's commercial arm, said. Richard Emery, managing director of BBC Worldwide Television, added: "We believe this will greatly increase our ability not only to augment the licence fee but also to maximise in future the commercial value of BBC programmes."

Even more lucrative could be the US joint venture with Discovery. According to a senior BBC source involved in the negotiations, the deal "offers us access to the US market, something we have never had before, and that should give the BBC the ability to become a much bigger global player."

Adam Singer, president of the international arm of TCI, said the deal "shows the power of the global alliance we can build."

The confirmation that Flextech and the BBC had entered "exclusive negotiations" leading to a final agreement by the end of the year marks the most concrete sign yet of the Corporation's strategy for the era of multi-channel television.

But the deal is sure to revive concerns, none the less, that the BBC is requiring licence fee payers to fork out subscription fees even for repeats of archive or library programming already paid for by the taxpayer.

The negotiations, which have taken more than two months, were led on the BBC side by Matthew Symons, a former senior editor at *The Independent*. According to sources at Flextech and the BBC, he is in line to become chief executive of the new joint venture.

QUICKLY

Brush with tar kings
A British legal firm is taking on two of the world's largest tobacco companies on a "no win, no fee" basis as lung-cancer victims demand millions of pounds in compensation. Page 3

Hill signs for Arrows
Damon Hill, 36, the leader in the Formula One world championship, and recently dropped by Williams-Renault, last night signed for the low-profile TWR Arrows team. Page 26

CONTENTS

Section 1	
BUSINESS & CITY	17-20
COMMENT	13-15
FOREIGN NEWS	8-12
GAZETTE	16
HOME NEWS	2-7
LEADING ARTICLES	13
LETTERS	15
SUNDAY STORY	14
SPORT	21-26
Section 2	
BOOKS	5-7
COUNTRY	13
RADIO & TV	25, 26
SHOPPING	8-10
TRAVEL	14-19



When the Taliban came, Kabul fell silent and women covered their heads

Eyewitness: Sarah Homer
watched the end of Najibullah's reign

As recently as Thursday morning the Afghan government said it had pushed back the Taliban militia, who were attacking Kabul from the east. But by the afternoon a short drive eastwards to check on government positions showed something was clearly wrong. Government troops were moving away from the front. Minutes later, incoming fire was landing all around us. Soldiers disappeared into dilapidated huts and everyone threw themselves on the floor.

I turned round and headed quickly back to the city centre. The Taliban clearly were getting close. As darkness fell the guns started up. Shells flew in and out and Kabul held its breath, wondering what the night would bring.

Most of Kabul's expatriate workers live in an eastern suburb called Wazir Akbar Khan, a few minutes' drive from the Microcyan flats, where government soldiers were dug in. Wazir was also a spot favoured by government commanders, many of whom had already packed up and left. Everyone else headed down to hastily equipped cellars while the houses shook from artillery fire.



and those with generators did not use them. It was a good night to keep a low profile. In the basement, trying to sleep I listened to the hiss and crackle of the

the compound was Dr Najibullah, the former president ousted by the Mujahedin, who for four and a half years had taken refuge in the UN compound.

Dr Najibullah's compound was in the centre of the city, so I knew that the Taliban were there already. The Taliban had taken Kabul, I leapt out of bed and looked outside. The road from the east was one street away. A column of tanks was rolling in. Horns were tooting and people cheering. Soon I heard that Dr Najibullah had been taken from the compound by force, possibly to the presidential palace. Was he the mastermind behind the mysterious Taliban? Anything seemed possible. A short time passed and the Taliban returned to the UN compound, this time to take away Najibullah's brother.

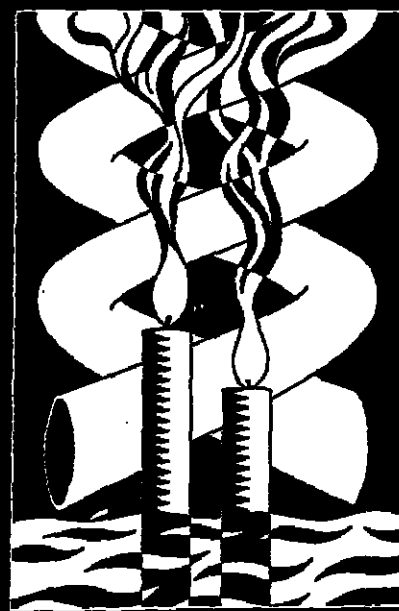
As dawn broke the news filtered through. Both men had been executed, shot and strung up by the neck at one entrance of the presidential palace. Visiting the sight, I observed the grotesque display. The back of Dr Najibullah's head was missing and he was peppered with bullets. His brother hung beside him, dressed in smart jeans. There was a party of sorts, the place was packed with Afghans who had come by bike or car to watch. One thing caught my attention. Few women were about and the ones who were there, even the girls, were wearing scarves.

Tide of the Taliban, page 10
Obituary, page 16

"His satire is exquisitely poised,
his storytelling gripping"

The Independent

IAIN BANKS WHIT



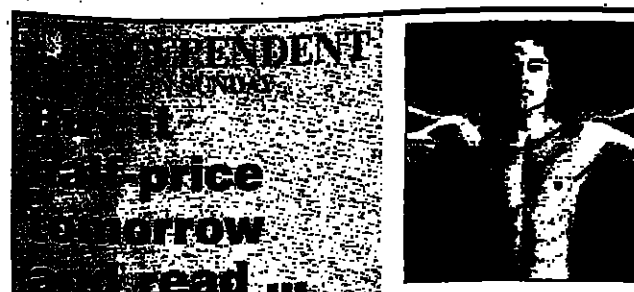
"Banks is a phenomenon ...
I suspect we have actual laws
against this sort of thing"

WILLIAM GIBSON

BREAK INTO BANKS
OUT NOW IN PAPERBACK

ABACUS

news



Strange new world
Our guide to the coming Cultural Revolution and how everything will change



Prehistoric swinger
Was early man (and woman) obsessed with sex?



The Winslet girl
Britain's brightest new Hollywood star talks to Tim de Lisle

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Tories lay claim to working class vote

ANTHONY BEVINS
Political Editor

The "hard-working class" voters are turning back to the Tories, Brian Mawhinney, the Conservative Party chairman, said yesterday.

Opening an election campaign appeal to trade unionists, with newspaper advertisements and posters urging them to join the Conservative Party, Mr Mawhinney said: "New Labour has abandoned the hard-working classes."

A party spokeswoman said there was ICM polling evidence for Mr Mawhinney's assertion that the workers were swinging back to the Tories, although Market & Opinion Research International (MORI) said it had detected no such shift. According to MORI's latest aggregate data, for the second quarter of this year, Labour's current lead among C2, skilled workers, was 41 percentage points, and among DE, unskilled workers, it was 50 points, with Labour at 68 per cent, compared to the Tories' 18 per cent. Labour's overall national lead, on the same basis, was 29 points.

Labour replied to the attack on its traditional support, saying that more than a million factory jobs had been lost since 1983. "And they now have the cheek to ask for support," said employment spokesman Ian McCartney.

But the Conservatives' private polling has evidently detected a Labour weak-spot

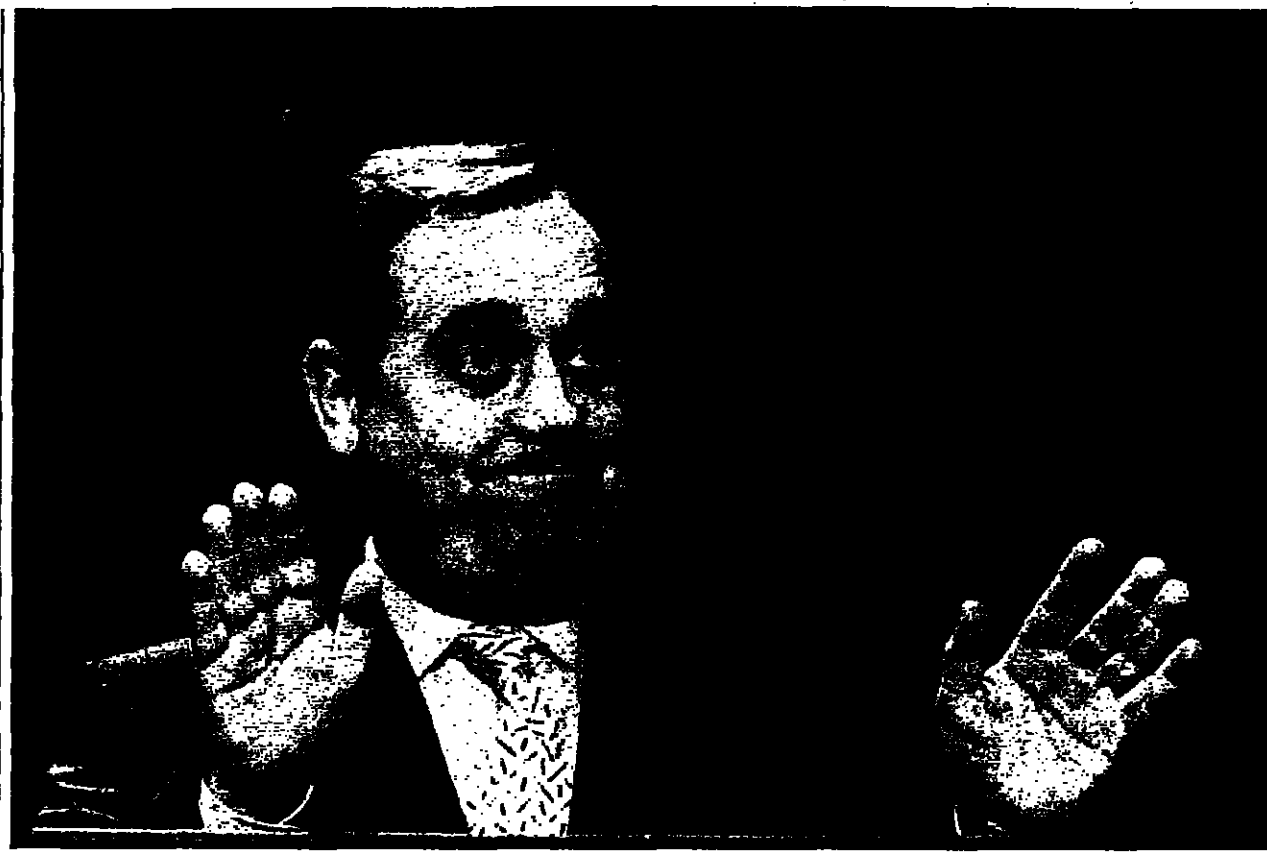
among lower-income families - which explains the latest publicity drive. The Tory machine is finely-tuned in its reaction to polling trends.

That also explains the current Whitehall search for the "no-nonsense" policies - like workfare and curfews for young offenders - that are thought to appeal to that section of the electorate.

John Major said after attending a breakfast for businessmen in Newbury, Berkshire: "Millions of hard-working families have always voted Conservative. There's nothing new about that."

"We share the instincts they have. They want a strong line on law and order - we do. They want the lowest possible taxation consistent with good public services - we do."

"They want to make their own choices for their own families in education and other things. We want to see them doing that. I am going to make that point very clear." The attack on Labour included an accusation that it had dumped "ordinary working men and women as though they were a pair of dirty overalls". Mr Mawhinney threw in the negative, personal line that now marks Conservative campaigning. Mr Blair always seems embarrassed when he is in the presence of a union member. "What a contrast with John Major. Our leader is not ashamed of people who work for their living - because that is the background from which he came himself."



Hooked: Alex Salmond acknowledging applause for his keynote speech at Inverness yesterday. Photograph: Reuters

Blair cannot be trusted on Scotland, says Salmond

JOHN CUSACK

Alec Salmond capitalised yesterday on Labour's embarrassing disarray over their devolution policy, warning in his speech at the Scottish National Party Conference that Labour under Tony Blair could not be trusted on the Scottish constitution.

Rehearsing a theme that has dominated debate at the conference in Inverness, Mr Salmond emphasised what he called "the lessons of the last three months".

Senior Labour politicians in Scotland are confident they will recover from the debacle which saw a full-circle change

in devolution policy to a two-question referendum on whether a Scottish parliament should have tax-raising powers. The changes meant four policies in two months.

Mr Salmond said: "There are 88 shopping days to Christmas. A maximum of eight months until the general election. On my calculation that is opportunity for a further 16 policy shifts on devolution from Labour."

After the disappointment of the 1992 election result, Labour immediately demanded a multi-option referendum on constitutional change which included the status quo, devolved power and outright in-

dependence. Mr Salmond ridiculed Mr Blair's policy of a referendum that would only include the choice of taxation as "rigged".

He said: "The Islington Policy is designed to erect an obstacle in the way of constitutional change - and the people know it."

To increase their prospects of winning a substantial number of seats, the SNP knows it will have to increase its current standing in the polls of 29 per cent to 35-40 per cent.

With Scotland regarded as a traditional socialist hunting ground, the SNP now clearly believes that by positioning themselves as realistic socialist

alternative to New Labour they can achieve some success. "Attacking Tony Blair, Mr Salmond said: "Labour in opposition are now more right wing than Margaret Thatcher ever was in opposition."

Labour, he said, was having an identity crisis - "they are not social democrats, nor democratic socialists, nor even new Labour: they are just old Tories."

Mr Salmond told the conference that just as Mrs Thatcher had destroyed the Tory party in Scotland by forcing unwelcome medicine down their throats, "Blair is now destroying Labour in Scotland with the same arrogance".

significant shorts

IRA suspect's brother freed on bail

The brother of an alleged IRA suspect shot dead by anti terrorist police on Monday was released on police bail yesterday.

Shane O'Neill, 23, was arrested during a police raid on a house in Fulham. At the same time, police were raiding a house in Hammersmith, where his unnamed brother Diarmuid, aged 27, was fatally wounded.

Police are expected to charge or release four other men arrested during the operation. Ten tons of explosives, guns, and bomb-making equipment were recovered in another raid on a warehouse in north London. Jason Bennett

Bus company axes services and saves £1m

FirstBus, one of Britain's biggest bus companies, is to scrap more than 85 services in and around Manchester after local transport officials yesterday failed to agree a formula for extra subsidies to save the threatened routes.

GM Buses North, a FirstBus subsidiary, blamed the IRA bomb three months ago for its decision, saying it had deterred passengers from travelling to the city centre, making the routes uneconomic. It is expected to save at least £1m. Joe Clarke, of the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority, accused the company of "creating a crisis by opting for greater profits". Patrick Toohar

Birds seized in police raids

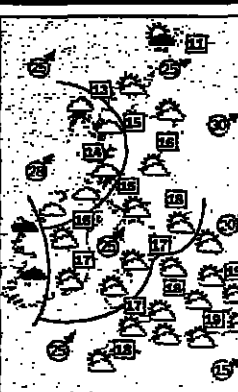
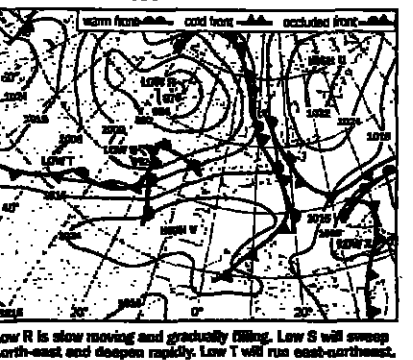
Police seized a rare red kite and other birds of prey in raids on suspected illegal breeders across Britain. Blood samples are being analysed to see if they were lawfully captive or illegally taken from the wild.

School veteran dies, aged 110

One of Britain's oldest women, Elsie Kate Day, has died aged 110. Mrs Day, a former headmistress, was born in Dawley, Telford, in 1885, and was headmistress of the local Langley primary school from 1931.

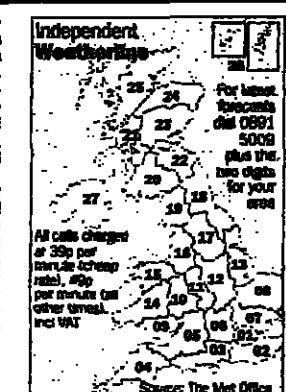
Weather forecast

NOON FORECAST



FORECAST: Scotland will have sun and showers with smaller rain spreading from the west along with a strengthening southwest wind. N. Ireland will be cloudy with rain later while the rest of the west will become from the southwest. England and Wales will get some sunshine, but the north will be showery, and it will become windier everywhere.

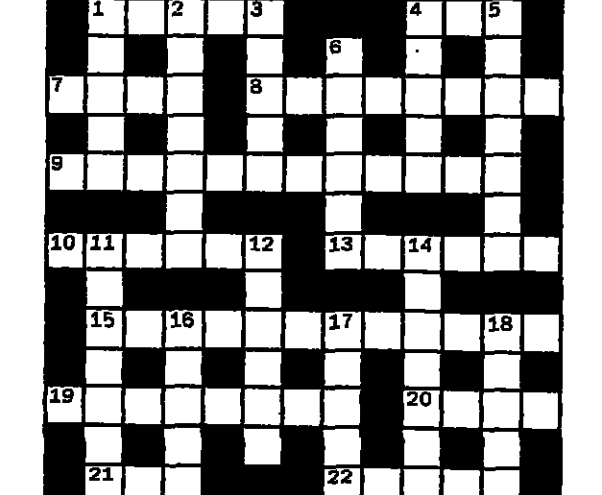
OUTLOOK: Sunday will see showery rain in the south with sun and showers elsewhere, and it will be quite windy. Sunshine, showers and gusty winds will affect all parts on Monday with rain in the west by Tuesday. Wind will then clear away to the east during Wednesday, leaving sunnier, and just a scattering of showers.



Location	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0
Edinburgh	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Birmingham	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
Manchester	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0
Newcastle	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0
Glasgow	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
Belfast	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0

CONCISE CROSSWORD

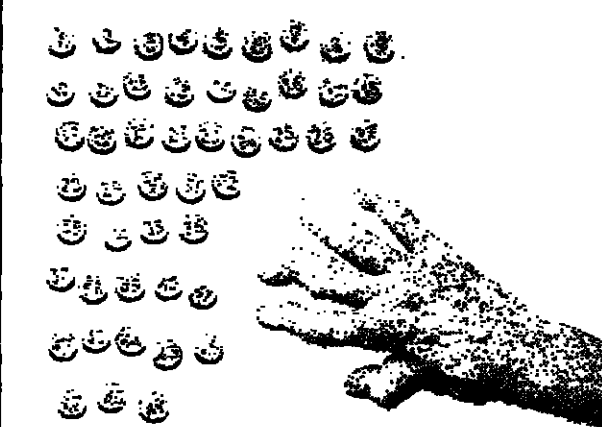
No. 3104 Saturday 28 September By Spurius



- ACROSS**
- 20th century English novelist (5)
 - Family (3)
 - Staple grain (4)
 - Nomadic lifestyle (8)
 - Facility for regular traveller (6,6)
 - Oesophagus (6)
 - Plant, source of red dye (6)
 - Not used (to) (12)
 - Oscillating part of clock (8)
 - Covetousness (4)
 - Organ of hearing (3)
 - Regions (5)
- DOWN**
- Refrain from insisting upon (5)
 - Implement (7)
 - Refuge (5)
 - Intuitive aptitude (5)
 - Item of male attire (7)
 - Self-centredness (6)
 - Sprung instrument (7)
 - Physical challenge in rugby (6)
 - Area of bishop's jurisdiction (7)
 - Poisonous snake (5)
 - Brazilian dance (5)
 - Overhanging parts of roof (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1. Tine, 4. Halls (Tennants), 9. Befog, 10. Macelle, 11. Onlooker, 12. Mine, 13. Bank (scarcely), 17. Lake, 18. Cockpit, 21. Bulwark, 22. Abuse, 23. Rider, 24. Meek, DOWN: 2. Olfact, 3. Egg roll, 4. Hunger-strikes, 5. High, 6. Soldier, 7. Absorb, 8. Fete, 14. Tabular, 15. Acedaim, 16. Disbiter, 17. Labs, 19. Place, 20. Maud.

LIFE'S A LOTTERY



When you buy a lottery ticket, you're a one in 14 million chance of winning the jackpot. The chances that you may experience some form of rheumatic disease are rather greater.

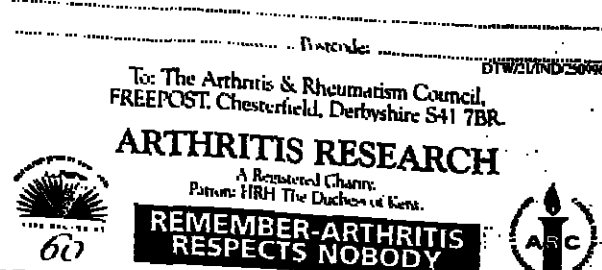
As many people in Britain today know, arthritis can cause severe crippling joint damage to hands and wrists. Feet, knees, hips, shoulders, elbows, jaw and neck can also be affected causing unrelenting pain and disability.

The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council is the only major UK charity financing medical research into osteoarthritis and rheumatic diseases at most university hospitals and medical schools in the UK.

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Name: _____
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To: The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, FREEPOST, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 7BR.



Something worth talking about.

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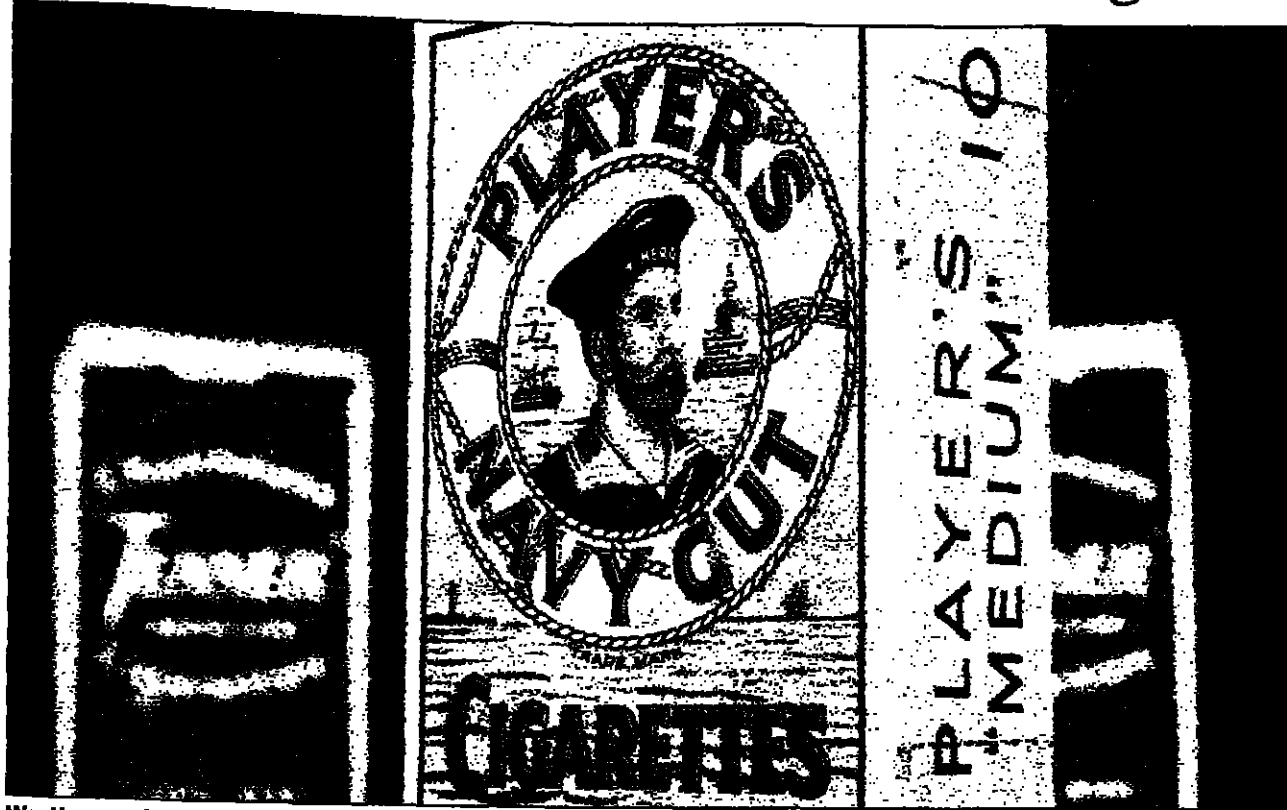
Return fare from London Heathrow Available on selected dates and flights. Subject to availability. Travel must include a Saturday night stay. Passenger taxes will apply.

Notes

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هكذا من الأصل

Smoking crusade: Cancer victims seek millions as 'no win, no fee' law firm takes on tobacco giants



Worth a packet: Top sellers that came from the Imperial Tobacco stable

Photograph: Brian Harris

Tarred with the brush of blame

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Legal Affairs Editor

A British legal firm is taking on two of the world's largest tobacco companies on a "no win, no fee" basis as lung cancer victims demand millions of pounds in compensation.

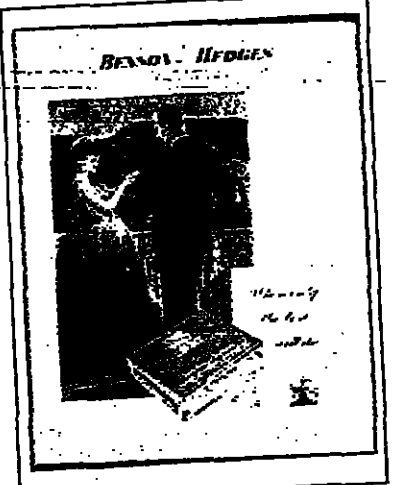
In what will be the first group legal action by British smokers, 40 victims of the disease will claim that the two companies, Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco Group failed to cut tar levels in their cigarettes when it became clear that this would have reduced cancer among smokers.

The group alleges that the manufacturers, which produce four-fifths of Britain's cigarettes intake, negligently failed to comply with a legal duty of care to minimise risk.

Leigh, Day & Co, the firm co-ordinating the case, decided to use a US-style contingency fee agreement - the first involving a group action since the principle was introduced a year ago - after the Legal Aid Board pulled the financial plug on claimants in July.

The decision to press ahead with the ground-breaking action will be a blow to Gallaher, the makers of Benson & Hedges and Silk Cut, and Imperial, which makes Embassy, Players and Capstan.

Ash, the Campaign for Freedom from Tobacco, urged brokers and investors to take "careful note" of the legal action when



The way they were: From the top, how Capstan, Benson and Hedges and Embassy sold their cigarettes in a colourful and alluring style in the Fifties

Photographs: Advertising Archives

from among the 30,000 people who are believed to die each year from smoking-related illnesses.

Mr Day, who will approach the High Court for the appointment of a judge next month and who will seek a trial in October 1998, estimates that if the group action is won, the companies could be at risk of claims for the next 10 to 15 years from people who began smoking in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Assuming that an average claim is worth about £50,000, Mr Day has estimated that there is a potential legal liability of between £1bn and £2bn a year over the 10 to 15-year period.

The two companies are expected to strenuously defend the claims. Each case could well turn, in the final event, on whether the alleged negligence in not reducing tar levels at an earlier stage either caused or materially contributed to the onset of the cancers the smokers later contracted.

While Gallaher said it never commented on current or pending litigation, Imperial Tobacco said it would vigorously defend the case.

Mr Day's firm stands to lose about £3m worth of fees if it loses. It has also agreed to limit the fee it will claim if it wins so that each claimant pays out no more than 25 per cent of his or her damages as a success fee.

Other senior lawyers have agreed to work on a cash-on-results basis, including Dan Brennan QC, president of the Personal Injury Bar Association, and Professor Mark Mildred of Nottingham Law School, an expert in the field of multi-party actions.

Karen Williams, a spokeswoman for Ash, said: "The lawyers are confident they can win and believe there is a just case to answer. Over the last 20 years, companies have started to reduce the tar in cigarettes but that was a long time coming. They didn't do that when they knew the cigarettes were cancer-giving."

A small number of the 40 victims announced yesterday have died and their surviving spouses are bringing their claims. The remainder have suffered serious illness.

Martin Margolis, now 74, is typical. He contracted lung cancer 14 years ago after beginning smoking at school and continuing the habit through service in the RAF. After lung and heart surgery, he now survives with two-thirds of a lung. His illness led to the failure of a family fancy goods business and loss of a £350,000 north London home. He and his wife now live in a flat.

Another sufferer, Anthony Bywater, a 57-year-old former car worker from Birmingham, had a lung removed six years ago. He said: "It is a risk for all of us in taking on the tobacco companies, but I am confident we will end up victorious."

likely to be appointed to deal with all tobacco claims. The judge's decision in the group action would then become the standard against which all future claims are measured.

If the companies lost, they could be faced with a massive liability for claims arising

'The lawyers are confident they can win and believe there is a just case to answer'

considering whether to invest in the tobacco industry. There were now good financial, as well as moral, reasons for not investing in an industry with an increasingly bleak future, it said.

There has been an avalanche of lawsuits in America from individuals and from states hoping to recoup the costs of treating smokers' illnesses. Tobacco shares tumbled by about 20 per cent last month after a smoker in Jacksonville, Florida, won \$750,000 after contracting lung cancer.

In another case in Indianapolis, Indiana, a jury dismissed a case because the claimant was more than 50 per cent to blame, but held a press conference afterwards to declare that they believed the tobacco company had been culpable.

According to Martyn Day, Leigh Day's joint senior partner, the growing use of litigation in the US has been accompanied by a wave of whistle-blowing from former employees of the tobacco conglomerates, believed to be 10 in all, who are anxious to spill beans on the past activities of their companies.

Mr Day said several hundred lung cancer victims, or their surviving relatives, could join in the British action. An additional significant feature would be that one judge is

Designers get real to please working women

MELANIE RICKEY

Real women took centre stage yesterday as Nicole Farhi, Betty Jackson and the Jean Muir label presented collections at London Fashion Week which showed the designers had a good understanding of ordinary women's daily lives.

Nicole Farhi and Betty Jackson are fast becoming regarded as the patron saints of contemporary working women. Both of their collections showed their understanding of the unpredictable British summer - you need to wear lots of gorgeous clothes (not minuscule bikinis) and a good, warm jumper always comes in handy.

The spirit of the late Miss Muir lives on in the elegant shop and showroom in London's Bruton Street, where the show was held. The team behind the label, a self-effacing bunch, are so dedicated to her memory that they will not even reveal the names of the designers. Three of them came out to take a discreet bow at the end of the salon show, and one suspects that they would feel uncomfortable sullying the name of Miss Muir with their own.

Their clothes were pretty without being prissy, and elegant without being haughty. Each garment looked like it held a secret: slightly too-wide shoulders on a garment made of the softest cream, lightweight wool hangs straight to hide a multitude of lumps and bumps - not that any of the serenely turned-out models had these. Customers will adore the belted jackets that skimmed mid-thigh and the fluid black, navy, and white jersey pieces.

Stella Tennant made her first appearance on London catwalks this week at Bella Freud's show. The collection was also for real women: not the sort who work, but who play - hard. Sponsored by Motorola, the show featured the smallest mobile phone ever produced. Clipped neatly on to a tiny suede bikini, it is perfect for those important chats on the beach.



Nicole Farhi: Regarded as patron saint of working women Photograph: Ben Elwes



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Charity reviews grants policy

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Editor

The Cancer Research Campaign is to draw up a code of practice for its allocation of research grants to scientists, which it hopes will squeeze out tobacco companies trying to co-fund their work.

The move follows its angry reaction in March to the endorsement by British American Tobacco (BAT) of £1.5 million to Cambridge University, for a Chair of International Relations. The CRC had considered withdrawing future research funding - worth £3 million a year

from research there, and its director Gordon McVie said at the time that he was "mightily displeased" with the university's acceptance of the money.

But yesterday the CRC announced that its council had decided to stop short of such a dramatic move. The code of practice could be ready by the end of the year.

The CRC is also commissioning urgent research into public attitudes to tobacco, the tobacco industry and its influence on the health industry. "Maybe people out there think that we should take tobacco money," said Professor McVie

yesterday. "Though I don't think so - we have had immense support from the public on this." The "tobacco" code of practice for researchers will resemble those already in place covering animal experiments and intellectual property rights which are a condition of funding for researchers applying to the CRC at present.

Professor McVie regrets that none had been drawn up before. "We have gone to great lengths to get it right with animal experimentation, and with intellectual property - who owns what rights to the results of research. But in the past we have overlooked this issue of other sponsors of research, including tobacco companies. I don't think we should co-fund any work with them."

The Imperial Cancer Research Fund (ICRF) backed the

Forget Long John Silver. A new tide of piracy is menacing the high seas, page 4

news

Avast there! Pirates return to the high seas



Wet and wild: Kevin Costner battling it out with the forces of evil in the post-apocalyptic portrayal of Waterworld

British yachtsman's death in hijack bid highlights rising tide of crime

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

The death of a man attempting to prevent hijackers stealing his yacht off the coast of Corfu highlights the growing problem of piracy for both recreational and commercial shipping.

Keith Hedley, a British businessman, died on Thursday after being shot in a gun battle as his yacht was attacked by a group of Albanian pirates.

The attack is part of a growing trend documented by the London-based International Maritime Bureau (IMB) whose director, Pottengal Mukundan, said: "In 1994, there were 90 recorded incidents and this went up to 170 last year and 87 in the first months of 1996." Incidents range from "maritime mugging", the theft of crew's belongings by people creeping on to a ship at night, to the wholesale capture of a large ship and its cargo. The most notorious area is South East Asia, with 22 incidents off Indonesia alone this year, but piracy has also been reported frequently off West Africa and Brazil.

Recently, the IMB put out a circular alerting seafarers about a 45ft sloop which had been spotted in the bay of Sihanoukville harbour in Cam-

bodia. The ship was occupied by squatters "who have rigged up crude swimming and a cooking area". However, the IMB suspects it has been taken over by pirates as the yacht "appears to have been very carefully prepared for a cruise around the world with the best equipment including everything a yachtsman would want". The IMB,

voyage as the *Anna Sierra*, registered in Cyprus, but after it was captured by pirates and the crew put to sea in life-rafts, it became the *Arctic Sea* under the Honduran flag. The pirates, who had Indonesian and Malaysian passports, had come armed not only with weapons but with the correct papers to change the identity of the ship.

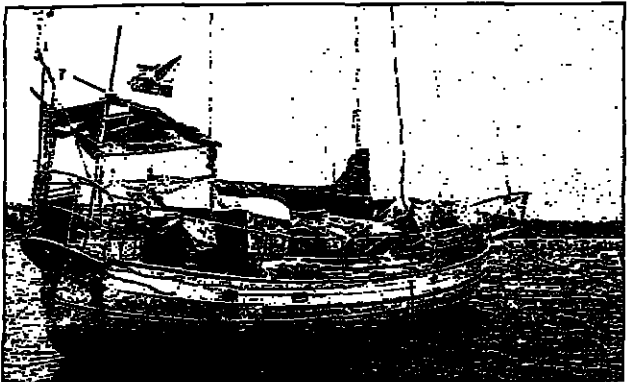
The ship is still impounded by the Chinese authorities and no prosecution has yet been mounted against the pirates because of disputes over jurisdiction between the Cypriots and the Chinese.

There are a couple of cases each year of whole ships being hijacked and half a dozen where the complete cargo is taken. Many of these involve British ships or British officers and a British captain, John Bashforth was shot dead in 1992 off the coast of Indonesia.

Numast, the merchant navy officers' union, deplores the lack of interest by the British authorities. Its spokesman, Andy Linington, said: "There must be better support from the diplomatic and consular services when these events occur because they are very traumatic. Nothing has been done about it since the tragic incident involving Capt Bashforth."

Mr Linington also called for the navy to be more prepared to protect British nationals: "The navy is helpful when a British ship involved, but will not intervene if a foreign-flagged vessel is involved, even if there are British officers or crew on it."

"Piracy is a growing problem and happens to all shipping from yachts to supertankers."



Suspect vessel: The Sihanoukville sloop occupied by squatters

which set up a special anti-piracy unit in 1992, called for any information about the owners to be passed to them.

Mr Mukundan says that the most spectacular recent incident involved a cargo ship carrying 12,000 tons of sugar, worth £3m, from Bangkok to Manila a year ago. The ship started its

Fortunately, the crew were picked up by Vietnamese fishermen and the ship was traced to the southern Chinese port of Beihai. The hijacking of the *Anna Sierra* raises the problem of lack of co-ordination between nations and maritime authorities about tackling piracy because nearly a year later,



Skull and crossbones: The legendary Captain Jack, as represented in a 1921 book on pirates, burying his treasure. Photograph: Mary Evans Picture Library

Captain tells of gun raid terror

Captain Mike Bellamy, a veteran with 35 years at sea, has experienced the horror of confronting pirates at first hand in two continents, writes Christian Wolmar.

He recounted the latest incident in his union's magazine, the *Navigator*, in an effort to warn seafarers of the dangers facing them in West Africa. Twice this year, on successive trips to Lagos, his ship has been attacked.

Capt Bellamy detects a pattern to the attacks, which take place early in the morning, and says the pirates are very well organised.

Despite the presence of nightwatchmen and armed guards, smaller boats drew up alongside his ship while it was moored at Apapa docks and began taking off cargo.

He told *The Independent*: "It is all very blatant. They seemed to be assisted by the local stevedores and the guards on my ship, with the exception who are hired out by the Navy, seemed to be too scared to act."

In the second attack, a very large ship, about 30 metres by 5 metres, drew alongside and the pirates emptied the contents of a whole container containing linen and clothing, and also stole a number of air-conditioning units. Despite Capt Bellamy being alerted and blowing the ship's whistle, the thieves continued their work until their boat was highlighted by a searchlight.

Capt Bellamy is highly sceptical of the Nigerian authorities' response: "It was only when they were well out of range that the armed police began shooting at them," he said.

In all, 16 containers were broken into during the ship's two-day stay. "On the first night, they do a reconnaissance, and on the second night they target the containers with the most expensive goods."

At least, during these recent attacks, Capt Bellamy did not have a gun thrust to his head, as he had off the coast of Brazil in 1991.

"We were anchored outside Rio de Janeiro when a group came aboard and took my chief officer hostage. They burst into my cabin and forced me to open the safe with a gun at my head. They took \$23,000."

He says the pirates off the west coast of Africa do not seem yet to realise that ships may have money aboard: "I am worried that when they find out we have safes, things are going to get even nastier."

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There's a great deal going on

The gas people say sorry over bills

CHARLIE BAIN

British Gas yesterday apologised to thousands of customers across the country who received "red bill" disconnection warnings despite never being sent a gas bill.

The company blamed the error on "teething problems" with its new £150 million centralised billing system and said it would be issuing new bills to all the customers who had been affected. It is hoped that the problem will be resolved by the end of next month.

In East Anglia and eastern England 12,000 customers have received reminders without a bill while in south Yorkshire and the South East, several hundred customers have been similarly affected.

A spokesman for British Gas said that the company had just 18 months to install the new system because the Government brought forward the timetable for opening up the domestic gas market to competition. "We would have wished under normal circumstances to take considerably longer over putting our system in. But we are not blaming the Government," he said. Previously, more than 60 different computer systems across the country handled customer information and billing.

Shadow consumer minister Nigel Griffiths accused the industry regulator Ofgas and the Government of presiding over "chaos", and suggested that the Prime Minister set up a ministerial gas consumers' crisis committee "to sort out this mess."

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هكذا من الأصل

Children under pressure: Nike and Reebok review conditions under which Third World youngsters work for pennies

Sports firms pledge to end child labour

LOUISE JURY

International sportswear company Reebok has called on its arch rival, Nike, to stamp out slave labour in factories making their goods.

Paul Fireman, chairman of Reebok International, invited Phil Knight, Nike's chairman, to fight "abusive workplace conditions in factories around the world".

Mr Fireman said: "With Nike's leadership in size, the combined market share strength of our brands and Reebok's own experience in human rights, a collaboration could be awesome, much stronger than either of us can accomplish alone."

The approach comes nine months after Christian Aid accused the two firms, the market leaders, as being among those exploiting workers.

The charity said trainers advertised by the likes of athlete Linford Christie sold for around £50 a pair, but the average labour costs for producing them was 46p in China and £1.19 in Thailand. In another investigation, Asian children were allegedly sewing footballs for manufacturers including Reebok for 10p an hour.

The companies have reacted indignantly to the criticisms and defended their records. Yesterday, Doug Cahn, Reebok's human rights director, again stressed its track record and how Reebok had established its own production standards, to ensure "high quality" work conditions in its factories, four years ago.

"This is a heartfelt invitation on the part of Paul Fireman to take advantage of the power of the two market share leaders. It is a logical extension of the work we have done already," Mr Cahn said.

Graham Anderson, for Nike, said the company had already announced it would have independent monitoring in its factories within a year, in addition to 800 employees checking its factories daily. They would examine Mr Fireman's proposals to see what else could be done. "This is a serious issue, we are trying to make a difference to people's lives," Mr Anderson said.

Christian Aid welcomed the development. Spokesman Martin Cottingham said: "If Nike takes up Mr Fireman's offer it will be a major victory for concerned consumers who have lobbied the sports shoe companies here and in the United States."

"It is unacceptable that these companies make huge endorsement deals with sports stars and market themselves as progressive while short-changing the Asian workers who make the shoes."

Rachel Marcus, for Save the Children, said the Reebok initiative could be an important first step in improving conditions, but nothing should be done which might make matters worse for the workers. When America clamped down on goods made by child labour in Bangladesh, the children were all sacked. She added: "There does need to be independent monitoring to make sure they're not just cosmetic measures."

Mike Dottridge, director of Anti-Slavery International, said international companies had announced their intention to "introduce principles" but said "they don't appear to have much expertise in knowing what the principles should be".

"Although they are well-motivated, some of the codes look as though they've been prepared so quickly it was really to deal with consumer concerns rather than with preventing exploitation," he said.



Paid pennies: A three-year-old Indian girl sewing a football for a living. Christian Aid has accused leading international firms of exploiting Asian children in the manufacture of luxury goods. Photograph: Marie Dorigny

Clarke attacks "tax cuts brigade"

ANTHONY BEVINS
Political Editor

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, rocked the Tory boat again yesterday with an attack on his party's right-wing "tax cuts at any cost brigade".

Having been urged by the Prime Minister to help keep the party on an "even keel", Mr Clarke moved on from this week's row over the European single currency to deal with desperate Conservative pressure for pre-election tax cuts in the November Budget.

He said in an interview with the *London Evening Standard* that the current spending round was "proving quite difficult", and he warned: "I propose to do nothing in this Budget that might run the risk of having to be reversed after the election."

More significantly, however, Mr Clarke specifically tried to nail suggestions that he was planning to whip up a pre-election spending spree - the boom-bust policy that John Major says will not be repeated. "Tax cuts can only happen if they are in the interests of the economy," Mr Clarke said.

As the tax cut "brigade", are by and large recruits from the same part of the Conservative Party as the Eurosceptics, Mr Clarke is clearly unconcerned by their sensitivities in the run-up to next month's Bournemouth party conference.

Meanwhile the Prime Minister yesterday said that he had no interest in closing the single currency option, because that would push him out of the negotiations. Mr Major was speaking after a breakfast meeting with businessmen in Newbury, Berkshire.

Under arrest:
a kite, a
merlin,
a
goshawk and
peregrine. Page 7

Europe adopts British curbs on Internet porn

KATHERINE BUTLER
Brussels

A voluntary British scheme for getting child pornography off the Internet is likely to be extended across Europe, EU ministers decided yesterday.

The scheme includes a hotline for users to report illegal material, and a rating system which allows parents to censor offensive images.

The move to clamp down on paedophiles using the Internet follows agreement by home affairs ministers meeting in Dublin on Thursday to step up police co-operation to combat paedophile rings.

Telecommunications ministers meeting yesterday in Brussels indicated they would opt for a voluntary code of conduct, to be developed between the Internet industry, police and national justice ministries, rather than any new EU legislation. The self-regulatory approach is the one followed in the Safety Net proposals announced in Britain earlier this week.

"The UK measures are a very good example of what can and should be done. They will probably form the basis for our approach," the Irish minister Michael Lowry said. Legislation would be "difficult if not impossible".

Britain's science and technology minister, Ian Taylor, warned, however, against over-reacting. He said only 137 of a total of 16,000 newsgroups on the Internet are thought to diffuse illegal material.

The definition of what constitutes illegal material varies considerably, raising doubts about the value of EU co-operation. But Mr Taylor said it would be an offence to down-

load child pornography in Britain, whatever its country of origin.

Mr Taylor welcomed the Court of Appeal's decision in London yesterday to uphold the convictions of two men jailed for distributing child pornography on the Internet. The court rejected their argument that images stored on computer disks did not constitute photographic images.

Dismissing the appeal by Alban Fellows, 26, and Stephen Arnold, 24, Lord Justice Evans said: "There is enormous disquiet at the potential which the Internet offers for the international transmission of pornography, in particular for those whose perverted tastes include collecting and viewing indecent photographs of children... Heavy deterrent sentences must be imposed when serious offences, which are not always easy to discover, come to light."

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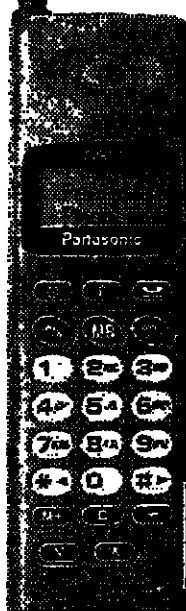
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news

My kingdom for a concrete sculpture...

A life-sized sculpture of Richard III has been unveiled at Middleham Castle in North Yorkshire, where the 15th-century king was sent as a young boy to be trained as a knight, writes Charlie Bain.

It was there that he raised an army for his struggle against the Lancastrians during the Wars of the Roses. He later returned to the castle after marrying his only wife, Anne Neville, to rule the North of England on behalf of his brother Edward IV.

The concrete sculpture, commissioned by English Heritage and sculpted by Ripon-based artist Linda Thompson, was positioned permanently in front of the Great Keep at the 800-year-old fortress.

Determining what the King looked like was difficult as many portraits showed profiles. Some were clearly the work of propagandists with the alleged hunch back varying in size commensurate with his presumed evil.



Return of the king: A sculpture of Richard III at Middleham Castle, North Yorkshire, where he trained as a knight

Photograph: John Angerson

New cash fears over Greenwich exhibition

CHRIS BLACKHURST
Westminster Correspondent

The planned Millennium Exhibition is in trouble once again because the organisations charged with developing the site at Greenwich in south-east London cannot agree how best to proceed, raising fears it may not be ready on time, and the final bill could be way over the original £500m budget.

British Gas, which owns the land, English Partnerships, the government agency responsible for redeveloping old industrial sites, and the Millennium Commission, which is donating £200m of National Lottery cash to the exhibition, are at loggerheads and have yet to form a joint-venture agreement.

All three have taken different positions, safeguarding their individual interests. British Gas is paying £50m to clean up the former gas-works site and build a new Jubilee Line Underground station; English Partnerships is keen to ensure the whole peninsula – not just the exhibition ground – is available for businesses and prospective employers after 2000; and the Millennium Commission is anxious to press ahead with organising the huge event.

As a result, sources close to the project confirmed, little has been agreed so far and the timetable is in danger of slipping. Sponsors complain they are still in the dark over the exact plans for the exhibition, how the road links to a notoriously difficult-to-reach area of London will be built, and what they will be left with once the celebration is over.

British Gas is understood to be reluctant to offer any commitment to provide lasting buildings, arguing the exhibition site will revert to its control.

"It's a difficult commercial negotiation to ensure everyone gets the very best out of it," said a project insider. "Everyone is negotiating very hard."

Those in charge of forming an operating company to run the exhibition are said to be frustrated at the lack of progress.

Concern is rising that the final bill could soar, to as much as £1.5bn. The commission has already received one warning from Imaginision, the exhibition's designers, that the bill could climb to £800m. The claim, made in a leaked letter from Gary Withers, the head of Imaginision, was dismissed within the commission as a softening-up exercise, to extract more cash. Others, though, said that Mr Withers' prognosis was accurate and may, if anything, be on the conservative side. Any lengthy delays, they said, could push his predicted total even higher. Clearing up the site is also proving more difficult than originally supposed.

One of those closely involved in planning the celebration said it was time for Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, who has made the event something of a personal crusade, to knock heads together and take firm charge.

British Gas denied any slip-page was their fault. "We are continuing our discussions, we are exploring lots of options and we are being as flexible as we can be," said a company spokesman.

Every Saturday in this Newspaper

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‘Now we have thousands of guns, the fighting will go on’

Prayer call: Shoes left outside the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem where three died yesterday Photograph: Reuters

Mr Rifkind warned that the peace process had been put in jeopardy by the week's killings and noted that the difficulty over arranging an early meeting between Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat was just one symptom of how far the process has deteriorated. "A few weeks ago a meeting between them could have happened almost automatically," he said.

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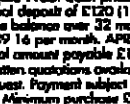
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International

Kabul falls to the tide of the Taliban

Raymond Whitaker reports
as a nation steps back in time

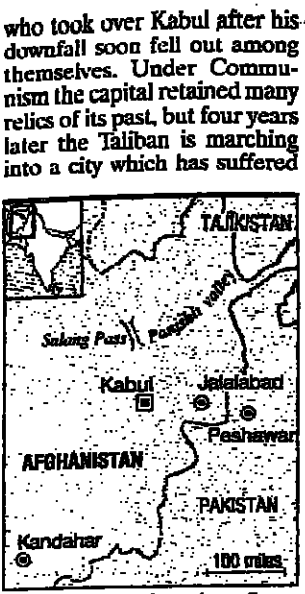
Kabul has fallen: it sounds like a 19th-century dispatch to the India Office in London. The sense that Afghanistan is outside the modern world, that it operates by the rules of adventure fiction, will simply be reinforced by the conquering campaign of the Taliban militia and its mysterious one-eyed leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar.

Nor will this image be dispelled by his first act – executing Afghanistan's former communist leader, Najibullah, and stringing up his body on a traffic kiosk outside the presidential palace.

Najibullah (who, like many Afghans, used only one name) took refuge in a United Nations compound when his regime collapsed in April 1992, but no vestige of the organisation's authority could save him from the medieval revenge of Kabul's new masters.

The romance of Afghanistan – its remoteness, its reluctance to abandon tradition, its elaborate and savagely enforced codes of honour – is also the nation's tragedy.

Najibullah was merely the latest of a series of would-be modernisers who tried to force to phage on the country, and his y further efforts did nothing but fu his further back. Not only did he lem ry to impose an alien ideolo-recruy, he relied on foreign in-shippers to install and maintain in-ness. But as many had foreseen, his he conservative mujahedin



who took over Kabul after his downfall soon fell out among themselves. Under Communism the capital retained many relics of its past, but four years later the Taliban is marching into a city which has suffered

Now the Taliban seems intent on returning the capital to the Middle Ages. But Afghanistan is sick of war, and the movement's zealots have brought order where the mujahedin were often little more than bandits. Any attempt to retake Kabul by the former government would probably require help from Abdul Rashid Dostam, the Uzbek warlord who has established a virtually independent state north of the Hindu Kush, the world's second highest mountain range, which divides Afghanistan.

Mr Dostam is seeking to build up trade and develop oil and gas reserves, however, and may have little inclination to take on the Taliban and its presumed support in Pakistan. Afghanistan has long been fragmented; now it may undergo partition in all but name.

Does any of this matter in the real world? It does, and not only because all the factions are fighting with the billions of dollars' worth of arms and munitions pumped into Afghanistan when it was a Cold War cockpit. The country's instability enabled poppy growers and re-

finers to flourish, making it the world's biggest exporter of opium and heroin. This is something the Taliban, for all its austerity, has done nothing to obstruct.

Nor is the Taliban likely to do anything but encourage the many camps which already exist to train Islamic militants from many countries.

"When we have conquered Afghanistan, we will conquer the whole world for Islam," one of its members recently boasted, and intelligence officials who have monitored Afghan links to conflicts in Bosnia, Kashmir, Algeria and Chechnya, as well as events such as the World Trade Center bombing in New York, know these are not idle words.

But the Taliban's adherents are no more the natural rulers of Afghanistan than their predecessors were – in many ways their brand of Islam is as foreign to the country as was Communism. Like those who have held Kabul before him, Mullah Omar might find it hard to control the unruly provinces. If he fails, it could one day be his turn to flee or face execution.



The road to Kabul: A jeep narrowly escapes a mortar round fired by the attacking Taliban militia, outside the Afghan capital Photograph: AFP

The day time ran out for Najibullah

TIM MCGIRK
New Delhi

From his shelter inside the United Nations compound in Kabul, the late Afghan president, Najibullah, could hear a 4. Every rocket and artillery barrage that fell during the Taliban militia's conquest of Kabul overnight yesterday was like the footsteps of an approaching hangman.



Najibullah: Hanged by the Taliban Photograph: John Voss

At 3am, Najibullah, the last Communist ruler of Afghanistan, realised the guards outside his sanctuary had deserted their posts. He radioed frantically to another UN building for help. Radio silence was his only reply. Soon after, fighters of the Islamic militia known as Taliban burst into the compound where Najibullah had lived as a virtual prisoner for the past four-and-a-half years.

Najibullah, 49, was dragged out, beaten, shot dead, and hung from a traffic kiosk near the palace where for six years he presided over the killing and torture of thousands of Afghans opposed to his Marxist regime.

His murder by the Taliban militia, who now control Kabul and almost all of the country, brings the last chapter of the 1979 Soviet invasion to a grisly end. Groomed by the Kremlin, Najibullah was put in charge of security during the pro-Soviet rule of Babrak Karmal, who was replaced in 1986 by Najibullah.

Nicknamed "the Ox" because of his wrestler's build, Najibullah survived in power by discarding hard-line Commu-

nism and by skillfully pitting one Afghan tribe against another. The mistake that probably cost him his life was relying on the UN. As the Islamic mujahedin closed in on Kabul in April 1992, he was persuaded by a UN envoy to resign. This undermined Najibullah's support in the army, and his commanders surrendered. The UN envoy tried to smuggle Najibullah to safety. But he was recognised at the airport gates and refused exit. Najibullah then fled to a UN compound in Kabul where, until yesterday, he stayed.

The government of Burhanuddin Rabbani, which emerged from the chaos after Najibullah's fall, did not arrest him since he was officially living under UN protection. But the niceties of UN conventions were ignored by the avenging Taliban. The new lords of Kabul have vowed to mete out the same fate to Mr Rabbani – who fled Kabul yesterday – if they catch him.

Obituary, page 16

Militia on mission to enforce peace

The Taliban militia, which conquered Kabul yesterday and now controls most of Afghanistan, began as a movement of former Islamic seminary students who vowed to bring the country's feuding warlords to heel, writes Tim McGirk. But their sweep of Kabul is unlikely to bring instant peace to this war-ravaged country.

Armed with tanks, rocket-launchers and warplanes, as well as the Koran, the Taliban over the past 18 months have succeeded in capturing such key Afghan towns as Kandahar, Herat, Jalalabad and now Kabul with astonishing speed and relatively few casualties. Many Afghans, devastated by years of war, welcomed the Taliban as a movement which would at last restore peace.

As the Taliban entered Kabul yesterday, jubilant crowds greeted them. Run by a council of clergymen based in the southern city of Kandahar, the Taliban enforce a strict vision of Islam. In areas under their control, they have closed girls' schools, banned women from

most jobs – they are not even allowed to go shopping without being accompanied by a male relative – and imposed harsh punishments on thieves such as executions and amputations.

Although the Taliban portrays itself as a movement which rises above the tribal rivalries which have doomed Afghanistan to centuries of warfare, they have recruited heavily among the Pathan clans of the south and central regions of the country. As a result, they are distrusted by the Tajiks, in the north, who supported the deposed government of Burhanuddin Rabbani. Afghanistan's minority Shia community are also wary of the Taliban's severe interpretation of the Koran.

Foes of the Taliban insist that the militia has covertly received arms and training from neighbouring Pakistan, as well as from several Gulf countries, but Islamabad has consistently denied this.

The militia's capture of Kabul has alarmed Iran and Russia, both of which backed Mr Rabbani's government.

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Prodi fights to reduce budget deficit

Sheer history: Workers are mirrored in a Hong Kong tower as they work on the building where the handover to China will take place on 1 July next year Photograph: Reuters

Romano Prodi, the Prime Minister, went into a cabinet meeting at 11am armed with a provisional agreement among the governing parties to cut the budget by 50 trillion lire (€20bn) in 1997 — already well above the 32.5 trillion that his predecessor, Lamberto Dini saved in the 1996 budget. But as the day went on and the meeting showed signs of coming to an end, government sources were talking of a 62.5 trillion lire cut — all in the name of bringing the budget deficit down to the 3 per cent of gross domestic product stipulated by the Maastricht treaty by the end of next year.

Roughly 38 trillion was expected to come from a combination of cuts in expenditure and tax rises, another 12 trillion from a one-off "Europe tax" and a further 12 trillion from unspecified treasury operations. It was far from clear, however, how this ambitious plan would go down either in parliament or in the country, and there were the first signs yesterday of potentially dangerous disillusionment.

At the budget's unveiling, Mr Prodi cast the support of a broad swathe of parties from the liberal centre led by Mr Dini to the far-left Rifondazione Comunista, which is not part of the government but whose votes are crucial to give the government

significant shorts

Burmese police detained pro-democracy politicians and blocked all roads leading to democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi's house to stop a congress of her party taking place, a government official said.

The Nobel Peace laureate had not been rearrested. The official said the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (Slorc) had decided to prevent Ms Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) from holding a meeting because it did not have permission for the gathering. "The reason for preventing the meeting from taking place is because they invited more than 200 representatives, and a congress of this size needs prior consent of the authorities".

Reuters - Rangoon

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Japanese unmoved by election games

LDP set to reassert its sterile grip on power as hopes of new era fade

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
Tokyo

Following Japanese politics is a bit like watching an obscure foreign sport - sumo wrestling, say, or Australian Rules Football. On first viewing, it is incomprehensible but after a few sessions, patterns emerge and rules come in to focus. Over time you recognise key players and find a team to support and fellow aficionados who share your enthusiasm. But to most of the people you meet in the real world, your hobby has no interest whatsoever.

So it is in Tokyo at the moment. Yesterday, the Prime Minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, made what should have been an announcement of great significance. The Diet (parliament) of Japan, which is economically the second most powerful country in the world, was dissolved in preparation for a general election which will almost certainly take place on 20 October.

Politicians and journalists have been scrutinising the tea leaves for weeks in anticipation of the announcement. But in the real world, it caused little stir. For the elections will be a game played among Japanese politicians, of minimal interest to their own people, and with no significant bearing on the problems confronting the country, or to its relations with the rest of the world.

The next Prime Minister, assuming it is not Mr Hashimoto, will be Japan's fifth in three-and-a-half years. During the same period, Japan has faced a major earthquake and terrorist attack, seen huge anti-American demonstrations in Okinawa, and made a slow economic recovery. If this suggests instability, however, it is misleading. Japan's political culture has remained closed, monolithic and unresponsive.

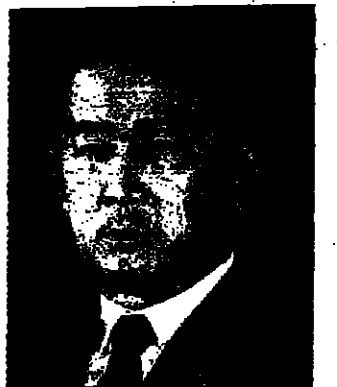
It was not meant to be this way. After the last election, in July 1993, Japan appeared to be entering a new era. The Liberal Democrat Party, in power since 1955, lost its majority after reform-minded defectors formed a cluster of new parties.

The coalition which they formed promised to reform the electoral system, open up the economy, and break the bureaucrats' grip on power. The

first goal was narrowly achieved, but the coalition quickly fell apart, to be eventually replaced by a bizarre alliance between the LDP and its former foes, the Socialists.

Before Mr Hashimoto, the coalition was led by the feeble Tomichi Murayama, a lifelong Socialist and, until his absorption into the unholy alliance, a pacifist. Apart from certain differences in style, the two prime ministers pursued similar policies on security (close ties with the United States), economics (a nominal "liberalisation" of markets), and the bureaucracy (reform, but not yet). In fact, it would be hard to find any politician who would not support these vague aims.

The interest in the election is not policy debate but a few



Ryutaro Hashimoto: Part of well-oiled election machine

strong personalities, and the parties gathering around them in the hope of achieving power.

The LDP has a well-oiled election machine and in Mr Hashimoto a leader who is impressive in public and reassuring to his backbenchers.

Credible opposition is divided between Shinshinto (New Frontier Party), the second biggest party, and Minshuto, which will be formally inaugurated today.

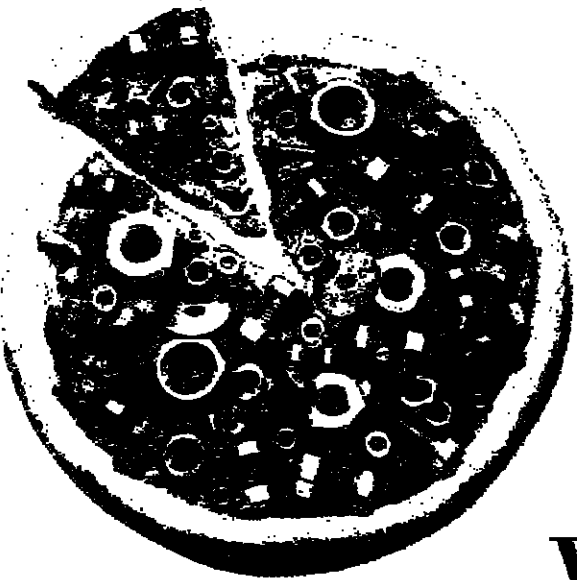
Tension among the politicians has been generated by the new voting system, which combines a first-past-the-post system with proportional representation.

The outcome of the elections is likely to be another coalition between the LDP and either Minshuto or Shinshinto. But, apart from the participants, it will be difficult to find anyone who really cares.



Star gazing: Astronomers in Corvallis, Oregon, United States, studying Jupiter at the start of the lunar eclipse on Thursday night

Photograph: AP



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Can Israel's playboy pass the maturity test?

Bloody reality has caught up with Israel's political playboy. Much hangs this week-end on Benjamin Netanyahu's capacity to grow up. He must act to end the murderous skirmishing of the past few days. The security of the nation of Israel depends on starting what must come to be – the establishment of some enduring relationship with the Palestinian leadership. It does not have to be warm, nor photogenic. But it does require concession and compromise, by an Israeli government that seems unable to offer even the tiniest gesture.

On Mr Netanyahu's rapid maturing turns the interim stability of the Middle East. With the calming benefit of distance we have no need to overestimate the importance of recent events. Human disaster that they are, West Bank deaths do little or nothing to upset the geopolitical balance in the region. They may make the survival of moderate regimes in Cairo and Amman marginally less likely but probably do little to affect attitudes and interests of Damascus and Riyadh. Islamic fundamentalism in Kabul has no need of this fuel to combust.

But this week's fatal mayhem in the streets of Bethlehem, Nablus and East Jerusalem could have been avoided. Even after Mr Netanyahu's May election victory there was nothing inevitable about the welling-up of Palestinian resentment and the loss of author-

ity by Yasser Arafat which is, in part, the cause of this outbreak of armed conflict.

The root cause is that Mr Netanyahu has been hemmed in by the savage hardliners in his right-of-centre coalition cabinet. The saga of the Jerusalem tunnel speaks volumes. Why was it opened now, a decade after it was prepared for tourist use, and immediately after acts of clear provocation? Mr Netanyahu seems, gratuitously, to have wanted to play to only one gallery – the religious extremists who make claim to the entire territory from Tel Aviv to Allenby Bridge. Then to disappear off on a joy ride to Britain and Germany without apparently preparing for what Israeli security services must have reported was an inevitable Palestinian response? Is Mr Netanyahu really so naive, not to say amateur, in the management of domestic affairs?

The Israeli Prime Minister won the election with the tactic of ignoring the Palestinians. In spite of the almost pathetic pleading of Arafat to be taken seriously, in spite of the obvious growth in popular anger among the Palestinian population at large, the tactic has remained the same: close your eyes and two million of them would fade into invisibility. Roads could be built, concrete foundations laid and the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza would, magically, part for ever. Like the blank face of the Western Wall, Likud and its allies have presented themselves as stonily immovable on key issues, such as the withdrawal of troops from Hebron as promised



by the Perez government and the expansion of West Bank settlements.

Now that wall has been undermined. The Israeli government can move in one of only two directions. It could reoccupy the autonomous areas, clamping the grip of martial law on the West Bank and Gaza, and thereby provoking the revival of intifada and the return of the bus bombers. Yasser Arafat goes, either assassinated or banished to the margins of a scene in which Hamas and the ultras take over. In such circumstances Israel's moral credit in the West would fall perilously low. Even jejune British defence secretaries (recall Michael Portillo's effusions during the Israeli assault on southern Lebanon earlier this year) would find it hard to offer support. Israeli politicians behave as if they can get away with murder because, in the case of the United States, they can play the election timetable. But after November even President Clinton will take a dim and distant view of this politically backward behaviour.

The other way forward is to attempt to build, through Arafat, structures of Palestinian power and responsibility – moves that, yes, bring once again into prospect the creation of a Palestinian political entity. In present circumstances a weak Arafat does nothing to benefit the Israeli cause: on the contrary, it strengthens the insurgent drive. If Arafat's condition for talks this weekend is suspension of the tunnel project, it would be a small, small price for the Israelis to pay. Indeed, no real price at all.

The Israeli leadership faces a clear test. Does Mr Netanyahu have what it takes to extract this little concession from the religious hardliners, knowing how much support he could get, if needed, from Labour and the Knesset moderates? If he fails to make the attempt, we can mark him as the merely factional leader of a grouping within a torn and agonised nation, a factional leader who has abandoned all efforts to lead the Israeli nation as a whole. Let him not forget that that nation elected him by the slimmest of margins. Under those circumstances, his role is to create a real majority, and for that there is only one road – the slow and stony road toward peace.

Accommodation has to be reached, sooner or later, with the Palestinians. That must mean movement more or less down the road opened in Oslo with the signing of the peace accords. If Mr Netanyahu has some kind of alternative – he claims to be a free enterprise liberal who may have thoughts about emancipation of the Palestinians by economic growth – then let us hear it. He owes even the most dogmatic of his fellow Israelis, let alone the pragmatic majority, some picture of just how they are going to live with their Palestinian neighbours in years to come. The only alternative is recurrent anarchy, the constant presence of regional danger – and then death – day after bloody day, more unnecessary Middle Eastern dead. No one wants it. What the world wants is for Israel to understand that.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Workfare looks unworkable to the Kentish 'chain gang'

Sir: Your report on workfare (26 September) highlights the fact that pilot studies on forcing the unemployed to work for their benefits are taking place in Hull and north Kent.

Evidence so far from the pilot areas suggests that the Tories will have much more trouble in implementing US-style workfare than they think. In both areas, the scheme – officially titled Project Work but dubbed "the Chain Gang" by many of its participants – is not only unfair, but also impossible to operate.

Hull City, Rochester City and Kent County councils have all boycotted any work connected with the scheme. The voluntary sector has also been unwilling to participate because the work is forced.

Some of the placements that have been found are in areas that were previously done by people on community service orders, placing both the jobs of probation-related staff and alternatives to custody at risk.

Ironically, one of the first

organisations in Kent to take people on the scheme was a local Napoleonic fort, partly built by French prisoners of war.

If "Conservative strategists" are "hopeful that [the] pilots ... will highlight the positive aspects of the scheme", they are either being told fibs by civil servants on the ground or are deliberately ignoring the evidence from Kent and Hull.

Workfare is unworkable. MARTIN COCK Vice-Chair, Medway Towns Trades Union Council Rochester, Kent

Sir: Your report and leading article about workfare raised some key issues, but did not give more than a nod towards the charity sector organisations who are likely to be asked to deliver a substantial proportion of any new scheme.

The Wildlife Trusts have 15 years' experience of hosting a succession of employment and training programmes from the community programme in the early Eighties to the more recent Community Action.

Any scheme needs to pass five tests. It should be: efficient, to safeguard public money; worthwhile for the participants; valuable to the community; practical for the host organisations; and voluntary – to ensure people participate for the right reasons.

Those planning the latest scheme should be aware that charities will welcome programmes which pass these five tests. They will also need guarantees that there will be no sudden and radical rule changes – a feature which has bedevilled these activities in the past.

Mental forced labour is not attractive to anyone. Worthwhile work benefiting local communities and the people carrying it out is attractive to everyone.

PETER R SHURLEY Director, Community Affairs, The Wildlife Trusts Lincoln

Sir: The question is *cui bono*? Certainly not the unemployed, dragged into bonded labour, to work at jobs that a few years ago

merited a living wage; not the employed, who with the threat of the *corvée* hanging over them will work for lower and lower wages for longer and longer hours. *Cui bono* from workfare? Corporate profits.

The greatest success of the Tories in the past 17 years has been to repackage political debate, from how we are to make a fair, just, democratic society into how can we have an efficient, profitable economy, while sidestepping the question of efficient and profitable for whom. LEONIE RUTHERFORD London NW10

Sir: So the Government is considering a range of "workfare" options (report, 26 September), the "most radical of which is encouraging employers to give work with training to young unemployed people. They would be paid by the employer and have their benefit stopped."

And I thought that was a job. Then again, I suppose for the Tories that is radical. KATE BETTS Richmond, North Yorkshire

An architect's dream in danger

Sir: We are concerned about the future of Brunswick Centre. Recent proposals to "update" and "improve" this small and distinctive chunk of Bloomsbury (two unsuccessful and one pending planning application) are short-sighted, timid, superficial and, worst of all, not in the spirit of the original dream. They do not recognise the potential of the place and give no assurance of real improvements to the fabric as a whole.

Twenty-five years on, Brunswick Centre needs a new heart. It has a long-term social, cultural and commercial future both for the local community and for London generally. There is now an opportunity to complete the place (in intent if not in extent), in line with its original architectural and urban aspirations. What is needed is some courage and much imagination.

There is no time for tinkering. We suggest that it is not only right but the best way forward that Patrick Hodgkinson, the original architect, be consulted about future plans and that he be appointed to advise the planning authority, the Royal Fine Art Commission, local Bloomsbury interest groups and the residents' association. SIR DENYS LASDUN ALDO VANEYCK Professor ROBERT TAVERNOR (Bath University) ELDERD EVANS Professor ANDY MACMILLAN (Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow) ANTHONY HUNT SHERBAN CANTACUZINO Professor DAVID SHALEV (Bath University) Professor ADRIAN GALE (Plymouth University) London NW3

Mandelson cracks a bottle with Kinnock

Sir: Peter Popham recounts ("Mandelson's people", 25 September) that Neil Kinnock opposed my "scheming" to get a parliamentary seat and that this was revealed in a row between us in February 1990 at the party headquarters which was overheard by staff.

For the record, this story is complete fiction. I had already been selected in Hartlepool two months before the date of the alleged row. I had one substantial conversation with Mr Kinnock in early 1989 in his room in the House of Commons to tell him of my desire to stand in Hartlepool. He was charming. He said he feared I did not stand an earthly chance of being selected but either way he would open a bottle of champagne: to celebrate my victory if I won or to celebrate the fact that I was staying with him if I lost. Throughout, he could not have been more considerate towards me. PETER MANDELSON MP (Hartlepool, Lab) House of Commons London SW1

Close to home

Sir: I have been astonished at how one of the recently released crime statistics has been reported by the media. The news that the incidence of violent crime has increased by 10 per cent in the last year has invariably been followed by the implicit reassurance that the victim usually knows his or her attacker. How is this supposed to make us feel more secure? Are we encouraged to recall all our past and present acquaintances and pass judgement on their tendencies to violent crime? SIMON WHITE Aberdeen

LETTER from THE EDITOR

BBC Radio Four's *Today* programme is one of those strongholds of British journalism that makes the news as well as reading it out. This week alone, we had the story of how Royal Navy nuclear submarine commanders are instructed to listen out for it as a way of determining whether British civilisation still exists, before opening their sealed orders on retaliation, and the story of Anna Ford being rebuked over her interview with Kenneth Clarke. Is this another example of the media's self-obsession? I don't think so: in a political system where influence has migrated in part to broadcasters and commentators, the *Today* programme has become a small part of the system itself, like a minor palace or established faith, and is therefore fair game. It is *not* *sub*, and would be destroyed by proper competition; it has become a place where politics happens, as clearly so as the Commons chamber. No one should be surprised or outraged that parties try to bully it.

A few years ago, I was offered a few days' holiday fill-in stint presenting the programme and, ever since, have listened to its presenters with some respect. One sat with a huge pile of scripts, hurriedly written after waking at 4am, while a voice constantly rambled in one's ear: "OK, we're dropping the Sri Lankan, so move straight to item 14, then back to seven ... the Northampton midwife's been delayed, and you've 10 seconds till the weather ..." All the while, one had to affect vocal nonchalance, cracking gentle jokes with the co-presenter and pretending to know what was going on.

It wasn't easy, a bit like ice-skating while declaiming poetry, and I was, I fear, deeply unconvincing. The real presenters were kind, with the exception of Brian Redhead, who took a dim view of whippersnappers musing in. Just before I went on air with him for the first time, and was watching for the red light, he leaned over and poked his spectacles down his nose. "Thought you had a job on a newspaper?" he asked. I nervously assented. "Hm. Then what d'you think you're doing sitting here?" he

replied, adding instantly. "Right, we're on."

The *Independent's* tenth anniversary is approaching, leading to many maudlin conversations about those strange days in 1986 when we were desperately producing dummy papers and waiting for day one. I don't suppose many of us thought the paper would make it, but it was exhilarating all the same, like an unexpected holiday from the serious business of life. That early lightheartedness was blown away by the turbulent decade that followed, but I've been back to look at the early issues and honestly think

The early 'Indie', misremembered as solemn, was at least as abrasive as the paper is today. Perhaps some readers have aged faster than us

that, despite our ups and downs, we've kept faith with the paper first produced by Andreas Whitam Smith, Matthew Symonds and Stephen Glover. Some readers have told me recently they think we should be more serious and heavier, "like in the old days". In fact, we carry more analysis and heavy commentary than we used to. And the early *Indie*, somehow misremembered as solemn, was at least as abrasive as the paper is now. Perhaps it's that some of the readers have aged faster than their paper.

Meanwhile, despite the Murdoch price war and the financial pressures that imposes, I can announce that we are bringing in new readers. For instance, Jonathan King, the broadcaster, was coming back on Concorde from New York yesterday, when he noticed a wiry, grey-haired businessman being offered, and rejecting, various newspapers before settling down with *The Independent*. And who was this convert to decent journalism? It was Rupert Murdoch.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

The most important thing for a ballerina is to listen to her body. Every small sinew talks to you, and I listen hard – Sylvie Guillem, principal artiste with the Royal Ballet

Girls have become the equals of men. They give their bodies as freely as we used to smoke cigarettes. It's a great loss of poetry, of humanity – Brigitte Bardot, former actress

Snails look quite elegant when drawing in their horns and curling up in their shells. Nations don't – Ferdinand Mount, once head of Margaret Thatcher's policy unit, attacking Europhobes

An armed mutiny may take place this autumn – Alexander Lebed, Russia's security supremo, warning of anger in the armed forces over government negligence and unpaid wages

I do all my own cleaning. I like it. I use lots of bleach and I vacuum my kitchen and dining room every day. Doesn't everyone? – Julian Clary, camp entertainer

There are no big politicians, apart from Nelson Mandela – Clare Short, Labour frontbencher

Politics are the ugly person's showbiz – Austin Mitchell, Labour MP

If I were to keep a pet animal in the same condition I am in, I would be prosecuted – Letter left by Bob Dent, 66, cancer victim who became the first person to take his life under Australia's voluntary euthanasia law

Audience makes the play at the Globe

Sir: Whether it was director Jack Shepherd or actor-manager Mark Rylance who decided to stage *Two Gentlemen of Verona* in modern dress at the Globe this summer I do not know. It was a masterpiece. The actors were dressed in the same style and period as the most important element of any theatre's architecture: the audience.

"Let's forget the building" wrote Victoria McKee (24 September) before taking up a familiar literary standpoint, when no theatre demands a holistic approach for theatrical criticism more than does the Globe.

The oldest extant illustrations of an audience assisting at the playing of a scene we all recognise is the 1777 engraving of the screen scene from the first production of *The School for Scandal* at Drury Lane. The scenery and galleries, linked by the actors' proscenium arch doors, had evolved from the Elizabethan *frons scenae*. Audience members relish a comedy of manners about themselves. Such synergy is rare. One can only hope that erudite scholarly teachers do not continue to rap brilliant young Rylance over the knuckles for unperformed "business" and what they see as soliloquies.

I was reminded of a chance encounter with Sam Wanamaker on an evening transatlantic flight after



Near the action: players and playgoers at Drury Lane in 1777

Mander & Mitchenson

we had both sat at the same table earlier that day for one of those Globe "meetings of minds". By Kennedy we decided that perhaps actors and directors should not tell academics what sort of Globe to build and conversely academics should not tell actors and directors how to use it. IAIN MACKINTOSH Theatre Projects Consultants London NW5

Sir: What is the matter with Victoria McKee? Her essay on the prologue season at the new Globe theatre

starts under the title "How does our play please you?" (24 September) and fails to address this question. Like an undergraduate who found the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* under the Christmas tree, she floods her article with Shakespearean lines, and after some snide comments about Paul Smith suits and American tourists with Harrods bags she arrives at the grand conclusion that there is still room for improvement in the use of this new venue.

I went to see *Two Gentlemen* with friends on the last Saturday of its run

and we were most impressed by the directness and the intensity of the experience, particularly when standing in front of the stage as "groundlings". The connection felt between crowd and actors in this thinnest of plays was nothing short of extraordinary and must hint at the possibilities for future productions at the Globe. Maybe it wasn't the learning experience that Ms McKee was looking for, but as a theatrical event it was unique. PETER KAHN Maidenhead, Berkshire

Tourists stumble into Antarctica

Sir: Michael Streeter's article on pollution posing a threat to tourism in Antarctica (25th Sept) suggests that all nations mounting scientific programmes are not behaving responsibly. While there are some irresponsible nations, the major players (the British, Australians, Americans and New Zealanders) have operated strict protocols on the handling of waste and pollution for some time.

Tourism is increasing, and does pose problems. Large numbers of tourists invading scientific stations (often unwittingly) disrupt scientific programmes during the short Antarctic summer. Hordes trooping across penguin rookeries can reduce the reproductive success of the birds. Unlike scientific personnel, tourists do not undergo rigorous medical tests. If there is a medical emergency on a tourist vessel, it is very likely that

a scientific station would be called upon to help.

I have seen inappropriately dressed tourists being ferried around in inflatable boats, often some distance from their tour ship. I wonder who would be expected to undertake search and rescue if (when) an accident occurs.

The scientific community has put its house in order – I think the tour operators need to do some serious thinking.

The revenue from tourism does not benefit Antarctica – none of it is used to support scientific research or to assist in cleaning up the rubbish left by less responsible nations in the past. Professor JOHANNA LAYBOURN-PARRY Department of Physiology and Environmental Science University of Nottingham

The case for independent barristers

Sir: I am grateful to Patricia Wynn Davies ("Solicitors set to present cases in the higher courts", 23 September) for reminding your readers that it costs the taxpayer less to have an independent barrister prosecute average three-day jury trials than it would to use a lawyer employed by the Crown Prosecution Service.

More important reasons why independent advocates should continue to present the prosecution's case to a jury have been identified by the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Legal Education and Conduct.

In June 1995 the committee recommended that independent advocates (solicitors or barristers) should continue to conduct the prosecution of the majority of jury trials. It considered the question of whether specially qualified lawyers employed by the CPS might conduct those crown court cases which involve the least serious offences or do not involve a jury. Only a minority of the committee favoured this. The majority

took account of the need, in a modern democracy, for the power of the state to be open to scrutiny. Their principal concern was that the employed advocate's ability to maintain sufficient independence could well be undermined or that he or she might become "prosecution-minded". DAVID PENRY-DAVEY QC Chairman, General Council of the Bar London WC1

Sir: There appears to be some confusion over the figures relating to the number of barristers employed by the Crown Prosecution Service quoted by Patricia Wynn Davies in her article. To set the record straight, a quarter of the lawyers employed by the CPS, approximately 600 staff, are barristers. JOHN O'SULLIVAN Head of Press and Publicity Crown Prosecution Service London EC4

the saturday story

A week ago, Pakistan's Prime Minister buried her brother. It was the latest grief to strike the Bhuttos, whose family struggles are redolent of Shakespearean tragedy.

By Rebecca Fowler

Final episode for Benazir's dynasty?

Benazir Bhutto was at home to visitors last weekend in Larkana, her face stained with tears, surrounded by maids who poured endless cups of tea. The Prime Minister of Pakistan, who has attempted to bring together 130 million people in a new dawn of democracy, had been plunged into the latest family tragedy to hit one of the world's most glamorous and divided dynasties - the killing of her younger brother.

They laid Murtaza Bhutto, 41, to rest at the family graveyard near the ancestral home. He was buried beside his brother, Shahnawaz, who died of poisoning in 1986, and his father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the former prime minister who was tortured and hanged by the military regime in 1979. His wife, Ghanwa, helped to lower the body into the grave, contrary to Islamic tradition, and placed roses on the spot watched by his mother, Begum Nusrat.

Just the day before, Benazir had sat barefoot in the hospital weeping beside her brother's corpse for two hours in a state of bewilderment, asking: "What

has happened?" When the service ended she retired to her home for three days of official mourning accompanied by her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, a wealthy property developer.

But within hearing distance of the intimate scene of family loss the chanting supporters of Murtaza, who returned to Pakistan three years ago after 16 years of exile, rang out loud and clear. They screamed their accusations through the sob-filled graveyard. "Benazir, Benazir, what have you done?" And "Hang Benazir Bhutto, hang Asif Zardari."

Murtaza, who had returned to Pakistan in 1993 from Syria following alleged terrorist activities to avenge the death of his father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the former prime minister, died in a hail of police bullets last week. He was attending a rally in Karachi with supporters who had joined his splinter faction of the Pakistan People's Party, a bold affront to the mainstream PPP led by his sister.

They were suggesting the unthinkable, that Benazir and her husband had been involved in her brother's downfall, a claim that was reportedly sup-

ported by her own mother, who sided with Murtaza in the sibling feud. She later rejected this accusation. How appropriate, they said, that the ones who had murdered him should be making the funeral arrangements.

Behind the curtain of tragedy was a family at war who had played out their battles with Shakespearean zeal. But Murtaza's death has brought the feuding of the Bhuttos to an unseemly head, prompting speculation that this could be the end for the seventh generation of Bhutto politicians - who married an international lifestyle, Oxbridge educations and high fashion with the bloody politics of Pakistan.

The death of Murtaza, who had not talked to his sister for two years, has emerged as the greatest test to date of Benazir, already bowing under accusations of corruption from the president of Pakistan. For her detractors, the irony of her possible downfall would be that it came not from outside enemies, but from the betrayals among the Bhuttos themselves.

Dr David Taylor, a lecturer in South Asian politics at London University's School of Oriental

and African Studies, says: "It's a particularly brutal episode, and it's part of something that has been going on for some time. But Benazir has also been in serious trouble politically for quite a while, and this is another straw. Whether it proves to be the last remains to be seen."

It began, like all family feuds, before anyone could really remember, against the national backdrop of Pakistan's fierce tribal divisions, volatile governments and military coups. The Bhuttos grew up at the centre of the fray, separated for long periods first for their own safety, and then by individual prison sentences in their bids to keep the Bhutto name alive in Pakistani politics.

From childhood Benazir, known as "Pinkie" to the family, was immersed in politics. Even at the age of nine her father wrote to her regularly about his political beliefs and ambitions. By the time she was a teenager she was sitting in on meetings with the likes of Henry Kissinger and Indira Gandhi.

When Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was arrested in 1979 on a murder charge, as the military took control of Pakistan, he groomed his daughter for the political stage from jail. He told her what to say, how to act, and to wear his old Mao cap and clap her hands above her head as he had done when he spoke to the people. From his death in April 1979 until the mid-Eighties, she and her mother were either in jail or under house arrest.

For Benazir and her siblings it was a strange upbringing. While she lived through the bloodshed and tyranny of Pakistani politics, she also went to Oxford and Harvard and travelled in Europe. In England she would drive around in her yellow MG; Saks of Fifth Avenue kept measurements of her clothes; and she delighted her father by becoming president of the Oxford Union, apparently more pleased by his reaction than the office itself.

Murtaza was 23 when he left Pakistan with his brother, following the military coup that overthrew his father. He fled for the safety of Britain, and he was branded a terrorist in exile in connection with the hijacking of a Pakistan plane. While his mother campaigned tirelessly for his return, Benazir was allegedly less enthusiastic, insisting that he would have to face the music in the Pakistani courts and could still receive 14 years in prison.

But relations with her younger brother had been strained from childhood. According to Murtaza, she was an authoritarian from the earliest age. "She would say: 'I want to go to this TV programme.' 'Don't make a noise, I'm reading.' 'Do this, or don't do that. It would provoke me and bother me more,' he once said.

As they grew older, the arguments were no longer focused on television channels, but pol-

itics, and they became even more bitter. Benazir described a family reunion in France, 11 years ago, when she challenged Murtaza's commitment to violence to overthrow General Zia ul-Haq, the military dictator who had brought down her father. After their brother, Shah Nawaz, and sister, Sanaam, tried to appease the row, politics was banned from discussion at future family gatherings.

But the relationship between the Bhutto siblings disintegrated even further when Benazir was married in an arranged wedding in 1987. The choice of Asif Zardari, known as a Karachi playboy and wealthy from property development, infuriated Murtaza, who was convinced the Zardari family would use the marriage to take over the Bhutto legacy.

The most devastating division was drawn when their mother entered the fray. For years Nusrat had dreamed of her son returning to Pakistan, making public entreaties verging on the style of Greek tragedy on his behalf: "I have given you, the people and the party, my husband. I have given you my youngest child. I have one son left. That is all I have got. He has a right to come back to the soil of Pakistan. He has a right to go to his father's grave. My son has been away 16 years. It's a mother's duty to bring him home. Please help me."

When her dream came true, Benazir was furious that Nusrat had chosen to side with her son, and his moves to set up his

own faction of the PPP. He also stood against her in the 1993 elections when she entered her second term as prime minister, amid claims that his sister had betrayed the socialist principles of her father and surrounded herself with fawning and corrupt ministers.

Murtaza in turn refused to call his sister by the family name, labelling her Mrs Zardari instead, implying she belonged to a different tribe. While he undermined the work of his sister's party with irritating verve, Nusrat claimed she was barred from the prime minister's residence in Islamabad, and was being gagged by the press.

In an embarrassingly public clash Benazir was accused of "ousting" her mother from the leadership of the PPP and flying in the committee to Punjab so she could become "chairperson" herself. Begum Nusrat said: "She telephoned me from Lahore and said, 'Mummi, how would you like to be patron-in-chief of the PPP?' I laughed. 'Pinkie,' I said, 'where in the world is there a patron-in-chief of a political party? You have a patron of a tennis club, a charity, an arts committee.' So I refused. And she said: 'Well, it's over.'"

There was a brief display of unity at the funeral last weekend, and Nusrat denied that she had suggested Benazir or her husband might be behind her son's death. But for Benazir it is perhaps fitting that the national problems she had attempted to overcome should

be mirrored so accurately by the internal wrangling and bloodshed in her own family.

As she continues to fight off the threat of another military take-over, and accusations that she has sunk into the tyrannies her father rose up against, it may yet be a tragedy too far for the Bhuttos. When General Zia ordered the torture and death of her father she swore she would never go into politics.

She said: "I grew up hating politics because of the fear that every time my father left the house I didn't know if he'd be coming back safely. I wanted a life that was ordered, a stable life. I decided that politics was the opposite of that because of all the dangers, so I used to say never, never, never for me."

Benazir added: "When I had my last meeting with my father in jail, he said: 'I leave the choice to you. You don't have to continue the struggle. You've suffered enough. I said 'No, papa. I'll never leave the struggle. At that moment I realised that I could not leave it. Too many people had lost their lives.'"

As the roses began to wilt on Murtaza's grave, however, political insiders speculated that this may be the end for Benazir, too. On Monday she will come to Britain to discuss the future of Pakistani politics. They have quipped that on Tuesday she, too, will be preparing to give up the struggle to pursue a role in international diplomacy instead, making the latest chapter in the family feud the last.

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How cheering to see that an appeal tribunal has overturned a decision that two waitresses in a Derby hotel were not discriminated against when they were inadvertently dragged into a Bernard Manning routine.

Sadly, Bernard Manning himself has got off, and it is the hotel that has had to take responsibility for his revolting racist humour. Mr Manning has stated that the case was "nothing to do with me," which, of course, is total coddling, because he is the one peddling this vicious rubbish. Isn't it about time the law moved to stop this kind of summary racist humour?

Mr Manning had said while cying the waitresses: "I hear you darkies are good at giving blow jobs." As if anyone is going to put their mouth anywhere near that offensive appendage. Still, it's a slight less offensive than his mouth. Perhaps, the group of offenders who have come off rather lightly in all this are the audience, members of the Round Table. Does this bunch do a lot of work for charity? I'd certainly think twice before accepting their money.

The Catholic church has issued guidelines to those in

its employ in the wake of one of its more senior members succumbing to the charms of the flesh. Rather amusingly, it warns that priests should beware of "hysterical" women.

Who are these hysterical women? The word comes from the Greeks who thought that women's wombs went off wandering round their bodies, and was purloined by that old coke-head Sigmund Freud and put to very good use on a handful of posh women who reckoned they were paralysed. (Always a good way of getting out of the hoovering that one.)

Perhaps "hysterical" is an unfortunate choice of word, because if these women's reproductive organs were constantly on the move round their bodies it would not have been quite so easy for so many Catholic priests to utilise them for procreative purposes.

So the truth about Inspector Morse's first name is out and the poor old buggar has been saddled with "Endeavour". No wonder he kept schtum about that. I had my money on Englebert. It is a timely reminder, though, of the suffering one goes through at school if one has been landed with a ridiculous name. At my

primary school most of us had names such as Susan or Jane, and it was middle names people waited to hear with baited breath at confirmations and the like, as grandmas and aged aunts were remembered in profusion. I think the greatest surprise I got was with someone I used to work with, whose middle name initial I noticed once and asked what it stood for. "Salome," she replied, fairly unconcerned. Makes my own "Grace" seem very pedestrian.

As I stay in hotels for much of the year I was interested to read the new *Which?* guide to hotels. Highest on its list of customer complaints are unfriendliness of staff and dirtiness of rooms. These vary tremendously, depending on the place and how important

people think you are. I remember some years ago doing a show in Birmingham for which I was paid what seemed an astronomical amount in tenners. I decided, never having done it before, to stay on my own in a posh hotel using some of the cash. Unfortunately, my Gucci luggage was non-existent so I'm afraid I had my belongings in a plastic carrier bag and have to confess I was doing a fair impression of Worzel Gummidge at the time.

I stroked into a posh Birmingham hotel and stood at the counter. The staff barely managed to raise their heads to look at me and when they did, their gaze said, "Get out, scruffbag." At this point I produced my wad and suddenly the atmosphere became summer. I was a

princess conducted courteously to my room and pampered for the duration of my stay. Was I happy, contented and impressed? No. All I felt was an enormous amount of resentment.

The debate rages on about women's clothes and how provocative they can afford to be before testosterone explodes in the male frame and said man is helpless to resist sexually abusing scantily dressed woman in question. Interestingly, women are split on the debate with the dress-down-because-we-know-they-can't-control-themselves brigade versus the wear-what-you-like-and-bugger-the-consequences mob. I have to say I'm with the latter, because potential sex attackers have to learn not to behave in this way, rather than society getting embroiled in a debate about degrees of provocative dress. A short skirt or high heels are merely an excuse, which is very handily reinforced by many old crooks from the judiciary. We should bear in mind that rape victims range in age from children to the elderly and from beautiful to unattractive, and they're not all wearing low-cut, flimsy clothes.

كلنا من الاصل

The Independent Weekend

All downhill from there
How ski holidays began, page 14



Arts



3 Man of Modes – Melvin Tan's new departure

You have no idea what it is like to sit at a modern instrument and know that what you play will come out exactly as you play it

Books



5 Man of Moods – the angst of Samuel Beckett

A solitary child, a withdrawn adolescent, a reluctant academic, a diffident lover, a brooding presence in drawing rooms from London to Munich

Shopping



9 Man of Mode – Tommy Hilfiger, over here at last

Hilfiger is the current success story of American fashion, offering a brand of hip, affordable "urban prep" derived from the melting pot of American life

LIVING 2
ARTS 3-4
BOOKS 5-7

SHOPPING 8-10
PROPERTY 11
GARDENING 12

COUNTRY 13
TRAVEL 14-19
OUTINGS 20

MONEY 21-23
GOING OUT 24

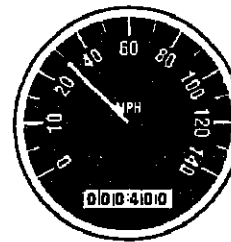
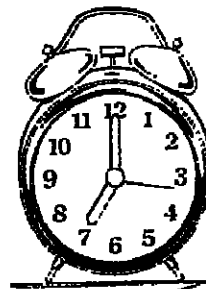
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When is a seven-hour play shorter than a one-hour performance? It's a question of rhythm

How long is a long play? This question, provoked by the opening of Robert Lepage's seven-hour vignette *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* and Harold Pinter's hour-long marathon *Ashes to Ashes*, is not one that a stopwatch will help you answer. The longest play I ever saw, for example, was a two-hour production of an existential drama in east Beirut. When the play was over I had to return to west Beirut, through checkpoints manned by heavily-armed men whose attitude to existential drama was likely to be equivocal, at the very best. I felt that every second of stage time added to their potential impatience. It was similar to the anxiety of missing the last bus home, with the added possibility that the conductor might shoot at you from the platform.

By contrast, the five-and-a-half hour production of *Hamlet* that I saw in Bucharest was a breeze. The naps helped,

naturally, but there was something else besides – an air of rapt, unrelenting attention in an auditorium so full that people were sitting in the aisles. When the curtain calls had finally ended it became clear what had distilled such patience.

The audience emerged from the theatre into what was a tedious commonplace for them but magically strange for a western visitor – a capital city as dark as a country wood. Here and there a dim gleam shone through thin curtains but there wasn't enough electricity for street lights, let alone neon, and there was nothing in the shopfronts worthy of illumination. Above the dark rooftops of apartment blocks and offices you could see the stars shining, undimmed by the glow-worm light of pocket torches, which people were using to pick their way home. Had the performance been even longer this audience would probably have been grateful; nothing

THOMAS SUTCLIFFE



else was waiting for their attention. Strictly speaking, both of those examples represent trivial cases – or at least non-theatrical influences on our perception of duration. When it comes to internal adjustments of the sense of time, matters become a little more complex. While stage-time isn't clock-time, for example, it nevertheless obeys a kind of rhythm –

Harold Pinter's famous pauses wouldn't even be detectable as such unless we were somehow aware that speech had arrived late, behind the beat. Any regular audience becomes trained to certain intervals and the machinery that governs those intervals may be buried very deep.

In his essay *The Duration of the Present Moment*, the Czech poet Miroslav Holub writes about the psychological finding that the clock of human perception seems to tick about every three seconds. Asked to reproduce an audible signal, most people will unconsciously extend anything that is under two seconds, become notably more accurate with signals between two and three seconds and then start to shorten signals over three seconds. Holub points out that an analysis of formal poetic metre seems to show an obedience to this internal metronome – what he calls a "carrier wave".

There are other suggestions, too: writing about the notorious slowness of Noh drama, William Empson builds his explanation of its effect round another bodily clock, arguing that the accompanying music governs your emotional responses. "A rhythm quicker than the heartbeat," he writes, "is one that you seem to control, or that seems controlled by some person: the apparently vast field of our music is always the frankness of the West, always the individual speaking up. Music based on rhythms slower than the heartbeat can carry a great weight of emotion and even of introspection... but it remains somehow impersonal."

If theatrical speech obeys the law of the moment, there are larger-scale units that play their part, too – culturally reinforced rhythms of dialogue, scenes, even of incident. And different playwrights will use these rhythms in different ways. Extra duration, for example, offers the writer two opposed possibilities – the chance to get

more in or to leave less out. They can, that is, either maintain the convention of artistic compression and use the extra time for more events or they can break the convention of ellipsis altogether and present an event "uncut". Lepage does both, accelerating to include large spans of historical time but occasionally slamming on the brakes to stretch out an important detail – as in the preparations for an assisted suicide. This means that the ratio of stage-time to imagined time is never fixed, something that may well help to diminish the audience's subjective sense of how long they have been there. In the Pinter, by all accounts, the ratio is more consistent – with events on stage seeming to take slightly longer than they would in life. Which may explain why some critics have experienced seven hours as rather shorter than an hour. The wise question, then, is not "how long is it?" but "is it synopocated or just late on the beat?"

INSIDE STORIES

5-7

BOOKS

Samuel Beckett; 'Inside Labour'; Roy Strong's history of England

8-10

SHOPPING

Over here from over there: American fashion superstar Tommy Hilfiger; tiles; auction preview

11

PROPERTY

Why building can be cheaper than buying

12

GARDENING

In a Japanese urban garden

13

COUNTRY

What field names can tell you about the past

16-19

TRAVEL

India; Croatia; Steve Wood meets Erna Low, the woman who brought skiing to the British

20

OUTINGS

Wyld Court rainforest

21-24

MONEY

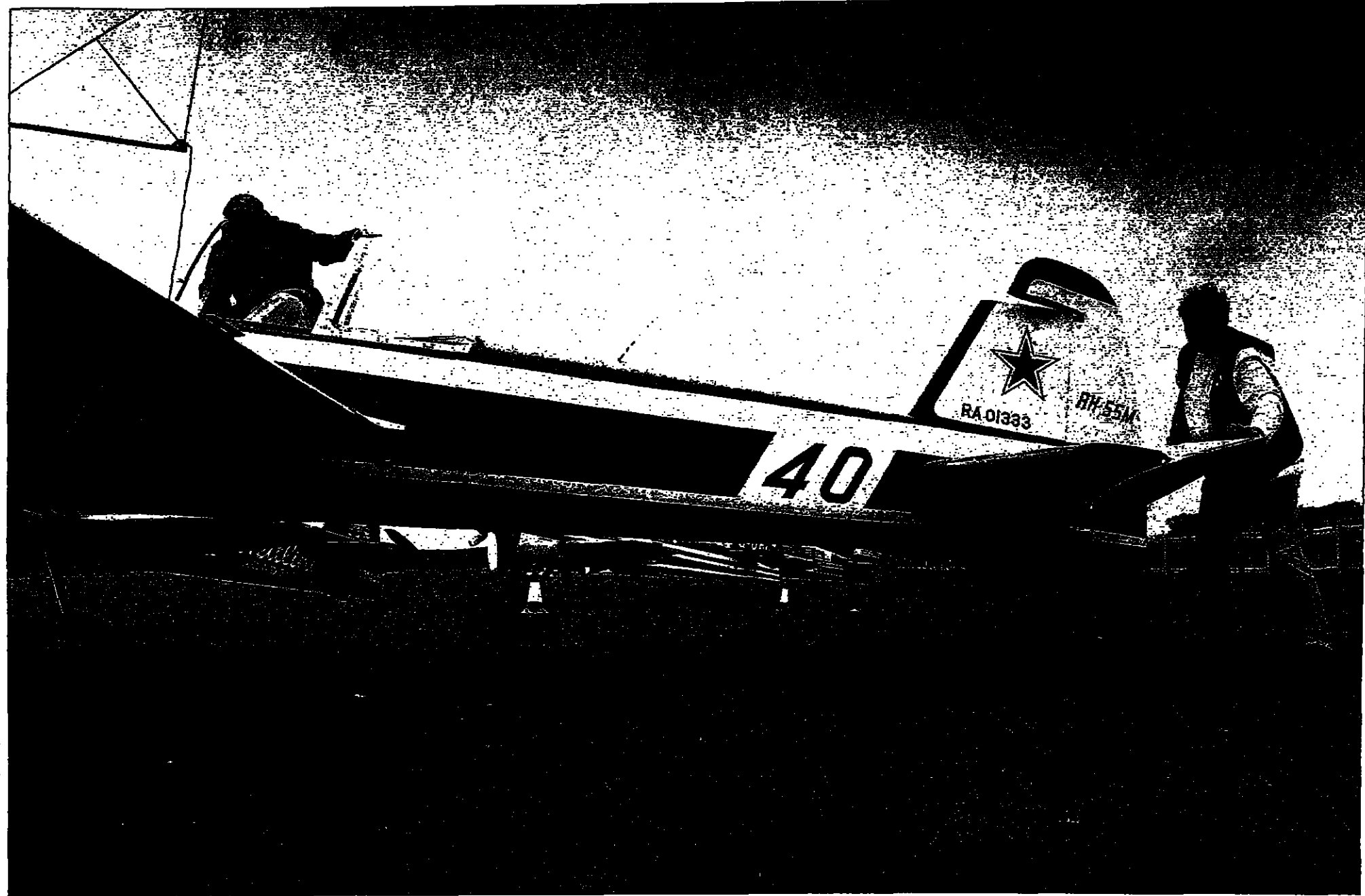
Prudential bank launch; investment funds surveyed

26-28

LISTINGS

Weekend events, Saturday and Sunday television and radio

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Those magnificent men...

SERENA MACKESY



In another life

There are five categories of competitive aerobatics: Beginner, Standard, Intermediate, Advanced and Unlimited. Funny: I always thought the sky was the limit. "At Beginner's level, all you do is something like a loop and a roll," says Nick Wakefield, a display pilot who did his first loop and roll in the Cambridge University Air Squadron. He's on hand at the Aviator Hotel at Sywell, Northampton, to do "whatever needs to be done" to ensure the smooth running of the National Aerobatics Championships.

The winner at Unlimited level becomes British Aerobatic Champion. The competition, the last and most important of a season which runs roughly from March until now, is also used to select the pilots for next year's European Championships. They take place every two years, alternating with the World Championships.

The Aviator Hotel is one of those square concrete places, painted yellow and surrounded on the roadside by chalet-style rooms reminiscent of the Bates Motel. The restaurant is vaguely Art Deco, with flight memorabilia scattered about. Men in kit chat in groups, backs turned to a glass display case. Inside is a memorial to a Lancaster bomber which crashed nearby. A shelf holds copies of those sepia-tinted studio photos everyone had taken of their sons as an unspoken hedge against never seeing them again: unformed, grinning, bursting with promise. Lovely boys who could have been dandling grandchildren by now. The propeller is polished, and propped up by the baby grand. It's a jarring reminder of how this sport came about.

Thoughts of death, though, are far from the minds of the competitors, who are on their practice day, running through the routines they hope will bring them another kind of glory tomorrow. The nearest I've come to aerobatics was in one of those big wheels with the revolving cages. The fear of flying upside-down was so intense that it's beyond me to imagine how you could do it and steer at the same time. Typically, though, of those who take part in these adrenaline-heavy sports, no one is prepared to admit any element of fear.

"Loop-the-loops," says Nick, "are very simple when you've progressed beyond them. When you first do them they're very, very difficult. It's a bit like when you first learn to drive. You can keep a straight line, but anything like that is beyond you. And once you've got your licence you've been hacked that part of it. Starting aerobatics is a bit like starting all over again. You're learning to fly again and it's all a bit disorientating at first."

Understatement, it seems, is all part of the game. The stresses are actually enormous. Even Nick concedes that. "Physically it's very demanding. You'll be absolutely knackered after you've finished a sequence." The main problem is the G-forces. One G is the weight of gravity. These people regularly subject themselves to eight or nine. It's the corners that are the worst: when you're flying straight up, you are weightless. Upside-down is dodgy as well: when you're hanging by your shoulder straps the blood pools in your head.

It's also got tougher, improvements in equipment having increased the stresses. Mike Riley, chief judge, and a Concorde pilot in his spare time, started flying aerobatically in the early Sixties: he was 17 when he first grabbed a joystick. "I used to be very physical, we thought, 20 or 30 years ago, but the machinery has improved so much that the aeroplanes are now much stronger than the pilots." No one who flies planes uses the word to describe them. If you respect the machine, you call it an aeroplane. "It used to be that the aeroplanes could break if they were misused. These machines are so strong and manoeuvrable that physically you are very much a weak link. You're pushing your own physical limits in an area in which there is very little knowledge."

Mike has represented the country "three or four times. I can't remember", and was chief judge at the World Championships in 1990. He still teaches and flies for fun, but doesn't compete any more. He's very clear on the thrill of why you do it. "It's the challenge of pure flying. It's purely and simply aeroplane handling skill. Aviation is a relatively

new human experience and, though we're not the first generation, we're the first century to be able to pursue this particular sport. One is very much at the cutting edge of a new human experience."

Once you have passed through the hotel, you suddenly realise the point of having it there. French windows lead onto a lawn, and then on to Sywell Airfield. A picket fence stops you from wandering on to the runway, and a sign adorns a stone gatepost: "DANGER BEYOND THIS POINT". It is a perfect spot to slump round a white plastic table and watch the goings-on at the aerodrome.

In front of us is a line of helicopters. People in overalls bustle round them; one is being shifted manually with the help of little yellow wheels clamped to its landing bars. Looking at the mechanics, you would think that this is a world quite heavily infiltrated by women. Not so. Most pilots are men. The handlebar moustaches may have flown off skywards, but testosterone still dominates. Only one woman is flying in the competition, Annabel Wakefield, Nick's wife. "There aren't many women doing it, no," says Mike, "though the best British pilot by far is a woman called Louisa Knapp. She's about 25 and incredibly talented."

In the sky, a tiny black and red insect – you would be hard pushed to park more than three Ford Fiestas in the space they fill – flies a straight line upwards, pauses, slides backwards on its own trajectory, flips over and plunges head-first toward the ground. This, apparently, is called a Tailslide. They have some great shop-talk, these flyboys: they do flick rolls and snap rolls and Lomcevaks (Czech for headache), Cuban Eights (a figure eight

flown sideways, so called because the Cubans are always asleep), Avalanches ("a Swiss manoeuvre") and Humpty Bumps.

Planes vary from around \$200,000 – Sukois, CAPs and Extras (named after their German designer, Walther Extra) – to £15,000 for a third-hand self-built biplane. Mike walks me round, pointing out their features: he recognises individual planes like a bloodstock expert recognises horses. Four-blade propellers for noise reduction, titanium bodies, carbon fibre wings. Seats are tilted at 45 degrees: pilots fly with their feet in stirrups as though preparing for gynaecological examination. This, apparently, lessens the G-forces.

Thomas Haueter, a Swiss DC-10 pilot, reckons he spends about £12,000 a year on his hobby. Why does he do it? "Sometimes I'm asking myself the same question. Sometimes it can be very frustrating. But it's a great sport. It's a good combination of the physical and mental."

Mental, everyone stresses, is what it's all about. Unlike air-show display flying, which is all about crowd-pleasing, talk here is of precision and geometrical accuracy. It's the difference between dressage and show jumping: the uninitiated may enjoy the jumpers more, but dressage is where the real skill lies. Competitors fly a sequence of manoeuvres and are marked down from a perfect 10 for each. "The psychology of the sport is interesting," says Mike. "The pilots are trying to create perfection and the judges' only interest is in the negative side of it. So the pilot has this feeling that the judges are doing something destructive. In a big competition this can create a sense of conflict. People get rather paranoid."

Fully conversant with this paranoia is Alan Wade, competing in Unlimited for the first time in nine years. He started his career as a flying instructor. "But you do get very bored being a flying instructor. It's like being a driving instructor, only the view out of the window's a bit nicer. And it doesn't pay as much." So he took on that extra challenge of doing it upside-down. He's been doing air shows around Europe – "I had to stop competition flying to earn a living" – and only decided to enter three weeks ago. He's a bit trepidatious about his lack of preparation.

That, though, he doesn't necessarily see as justification for failure. "If you walk around and talk to the pilots, none of them have practised for three months, they only got the aeroplane back yesterday, there's far too much fuel in it and so forth. But when it comes down to it, it's all down to the guy holding the stick. There are no excuses."

هكذا من الأصل

A piano-player's life begins at forte

The rest of the world woke up to the possibilities of the modern pianoforte almost two centuries ago. So why has it taken Melvyn Tan so long to catch up? As the noted fortepianist marks his 40th birthday by moving over to the modern concert grand, Edward Seckerson suggests that fear was only partly the key

A copy of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata lies open on the shiny new Bösendorfer. And for a moment or two you wonder what it's doing there – the Bösendorfer, that is, not the Beethoven. For this is Melvyn Tan's west London studio and for the past 15 or so years Tan has been famously estranged from the modern piano. Too much Liszt at college – that's one theory. Or too little Mozart. At any rate, every man's pianoforte became this man's fortepiano. In his own words, he became "lost in the historical perspective" of these temperamental, deceptively soft-spoken instruments. He collected them, learnt to love them, understand them, master them – so far as one could ever master them. His elegant physique and countenance became almost an extension of them. It was hard to imagine that Melvyn Tan could ever again grace anything quite so vulgar as a Steinway grand.

Yet here he was hiding away a modern Bösendorfer like some illicit lover. Well, not exactly. Tan is 40 in a fortnight's time – on 13 October, to be exact – and will be celebrating "with friends" (the mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter and cellist Steven Isserlis) at a Wigmore Hall concert the day before, when he'll discreetly make public his intention henceforth to divide himself between fortepiano and pianoforte – by playing both. Quite a moment: Melvyn Tan and the modern piano effectively "outed" in London society. Given his reputation, his seemingly unshakeable allegiance to the fortepiano, it's tantamount to a Pauline conversion. But Tan is playing it down. "I prefer to think of it as more of a natural progression," he says. "I've made my statement about these early instruments. I've explored them in their historical context, discovered to what extent they fashioned the music of their time... so maybe I can just get on now and play the piano..."

Well, that is where he first came in. At the Menuhin School, the piano, the modern piano, was Tan's primary study. But his playing wasn't progressing. Or rather, his playing was, but he wasn't. Melvyn Tan, the musician, needed to grow, grow into and through the repertoire he played. Feel a part of it, spiritually, historically. Acres of Liszt and Szymanowski weren't about to do that for him. Aspirations to conduct (now ancient history, he assures me) were subsequently thwarted by the Royal College of Music's refusal to accept conducting as a subsidiary study to piano. So the harpsichord became his second instrument. And something connected. The instrument, the period, the sound and style. Something. It was as if he'd been spirited back in time and met himself coming the other way. Now the fortepiano caught his ear, lightened his touch, "contained" his playing in a way that all that Liszt and Szymanowski had not. He played Mozart for the first time, from Mozart's perspective, and he loved the feel of it. The lighter construction of the older instrument (wood as opposed to iron frame, thinner strings, lower tensions), the clear, bright, immediate, singing tone, the absence of resonance encouraging, coaxing, teasing subtler articulations. A whole new vocabulary of them. Mozart began here. So, in a sense, did Tan. But what happens when you move on, and the instruments don't...?

this is really rather nice..." – which is a fortepianist's way of saying that he was hopelessly smitten, that he hadn't experienced a thrill like it since laying hands on Beethoven's own 1817 Broadwood. A phone call to Bösendorfer secured him a two-month rental on an instrument of his own. Just a rental, you understand...

Still, I imagine that royalties from the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice* have helped square the purchase (a quick canter through Carl Davis's main title theme is probably the easiest money Tan has ever made). It might well have changed his life. An impromptu demonstration – a snatch or two of the *Hammerklavier* – satisfies my curiosity. Andras Schiff, the Hungarian pianist, once told me that if he were to play the opening of that piece on Beethoven's own piano – and play it exactly as Beethoven had imagined it – then that would be the end of it. The piano, that is. Broken strings, broken hammer shanks, heaven knows what else. But Tan should know – he toured Europe with that particular piano just a few years ago.

Right now he's striking out on his 1838 Streicher: dry and immediate, rhythms cut to the bone. No depth, no resonance. Over to the Bösendorfer. His whole countenance changes. He looks more expansive. "You see, I hear so many more inner voices, so much more resonance in the middle! The notes sustain longer, so you hear the overtones better, with all the harmonic implications. It really brings to life the fantasy-like nature of the music, doesn't it?" He is preaching to the converted.

Only last month, in San Francisco, Tan played Mozart Concertos on the modern concert grand. In his words, he felt "almost embarrassed" at the freedom it afforded him. So you can see, there are psychological barriers to be crossed here. No question, the modern piano can actively encourage indulgence. But, by the same token, the fortepiano can create tensions, inhibitions, of its own. Tan himself is rediscovering what it is to relax into a piece, to open up phrasings, explore colour and dynamics, relate spirit to sound once more.

"You have no idea what it is like to sit at a modern instrument and know that it will sound exactly as it did in rehearsal, that what you play will come out exactly as you play it, and that, if anything goes wrong, then it's your fault. On the fortepiano, you really never can tell what it is going to do. And if a single note doesn't repeat as you remembered it last time, it can ruin your concentration, it can throw your whole performance out of alignment. You learn to compensate – maybe play a phrase less quickly to ensure that the note *does* speak, and so on – but always at the back of your mind is the question: is this going to work?"

So the born-again Melvyn Tan is going to have two distinct playing personalities – the one informing the other. He has no intention of phasing out the instrument he loves to hate – not after all that perseverance. Besides, playing Clementi or Mozart on a tiny keyboard is still his idea of heaven. But make no mistake, the shiny Bösendorfer has opened up a second childhood for him. He looks forward to playing it each day; he looks forward to all that new repertoire. Chopin, of course. And Schumann. His Wigmore Hall recital in July 1997 – his first on the modern piano – will feature both the Chopin *Preludes* and Schumann's *Kreisleriana*. Then there's the concerto repertoire, the prospect of working with conductors who aren't period specialists, whose broader horizons will hopefully enrich his own work. Bookings for the Schumann concerto are already looking good, then there are the Chopins, the Saint-Saëns, the Mendelssohn G minor and the Ravel G major (I can hear – and see – Tan cutting a dash with that piece).

But then it's hardly surprising that he should feel such affinity with the French repertoire. To be nurtured at such a tender age by the likes of Vlado Perlemuter (a pupil of Ravel) and Nadia Boulanger (who studied with Fauré). None of his teachers was German – which is probably why he has to work that much harder at Brahms. Or is it simply a matter of temperament and taste? The fine-spun, delicate, but highly coloured French sound that Boulanger favoured came naturally to him. It wasn't something he learnt. He remembers feeling frustrated that Perlemuter said so little to him during his lessons. He'd just point him in the right direction and let him play. But now he realises that everything that really matters about music cannot be taught, only discovered. "Having had the experience of the last 15 or 16 years of growing as a musician, albeit in a particular field of learning, I feel like I can now apply that learning to my new adventures..."

Life begins at 40? Could be.

Melvyn Tan's 40th Birthday Concert is on Saturday 12 October at the Wigmore Hall, London W1 (booking: 0171-935 2141)



You have no idea what it is like to sit at a modern instrument and know that it will sound exactly as it did in rehearsal, that what you play will come out exactly as you play it: two weeks short of his 40th birthday, virtuoso fortepianist Melvyn Tan revels in the state-of-the-art reliability of his new Bösendorfer concert grand after some 15 years spent combating the inbuilt unpredictability of its ancient predecessor
Photograph: John Lawrence

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arts reviews

Laugh? I very nearly joined the fan club

Mark Wareham has never had much time for Victoria Wood: all that bland bonhomie, those songs. So he wasn't exactly looking forward to two hours in her company. But then...

"I'll come straight out with it. I don't like Victoria Wood. Maybe we just got off on the wrong foot, I don't know, but the first and only time I saw her live was in the West End some eight years ago (she doesn't tour that often) and boy did I suffer. Her material was bland and trite, her mannerisms irritating, her humour clever-clever at the expense of comic...

And then there were the songs. Pacans to the God of Cringe, her jolly piano ditties had me squirming so intensely I wore out what was left of the velvet on my once plush West End seat.

So here we go again for the first of a string of dates at London's Royal Albert Hall, rounding off an extensive sell-out schiep through the country's theatres and civic halls. One of comedy's great untouchables nonchalantly accepts a tumultuous 5,000-strong Albert Hall welcome as she bounds on to the stage... or rather 4,999-strong. Because I know what's coming, don't I?

"Ay," she begins, looking up at the cliff of seats stretching up to the roof where I'm seated glum-faced. "Well, it gets you out of the house, don't it." And it's about five minutes into the set (I know this because I've been looking at my neighbour's watch on the minute every minute) when a gag about the emergency Lilet in her handbag that doubles as an anti-mugging device (it's so old, the assailant dies of toxic shock syndrome) causes someone to erupt and, yes, spray me with their laughter spittle. I look around, indignantly at first, and then somewhat sheepishly as it registers that those laughing juices are my laughing juices. It is my laughter. I have been laughing at Victoria Wood.

You can guess the rest. The brilliance of her delivery as she leaves a punchline dangling, pausing for so long she has time to take a sip of water, before returning to finish it off with a flourish. The sheer dazzling wordplay of the writing, inviting comparisons with Alan Bennett in its pacing and dryness. And, for a performer not naturally given to audience interaction, the confidence to break off three times mid-song and shout down a zealous punter determined to start a clap-happy singalong.



She sings, she tells jokes, she's Victoria Wood (left). If only she didn't sing

Smutty without being crude, she manages the not inconsiderable feat of talking about her public hair - "it's all over the place, spreading, joining, clumping up... it's like some bloody rocky plant" - and making it sound almost sweet. The

material is everything you'd expect from Ruby Wax or French & Saunders - cellulite, shopping, colonic irrigation - but so much better observed. And when she pulls a yellow bonnet tight over her face and dons an orange plastic mac for one

of her nerdish characters, you can see who Jane Horrocks has been studying. And, get this, even the musical interludes are bearable, particularly an anti-PC lament about not being able to use a word that rhymes with "hanker".

Until she goes and spoils it all with one of those songs, those special songs, that leave you curled up with embarrassment, knees tucked tightly under your chin, as she wails a heartfelt ballad about looking for "a better day", head tossing from side to side à la Miss Piggy. It's that Mike Yarwood "and this is me" moment, when all you can do is sit there, squirming, and praying that the piano lid might come crashing down on her fingers, because her yelping would be more musical.

OK, so I'm being picky, but I still find her Mrs Normal routine irritatingly jarring. Call me a stickler, but I like my observational comedy to contain at least a germ of reality, and Victoria Wood with her bags of shopping on a number 19 bus up the Archway Road doesn't quite get there. And couldn't she please spare us the *Crossroads* material and burning insights into the family Christmas?

And so there I was hanging by a thread, still telling myself that I wasn't really a convert, when she came on for the finale, done up as a pulsating pink aerobics teacher, tossing her ash-blond Page-3 mane into the air while shrieking instructions at the audience. Whether or not the sketch was funny I can't recall, but as an exercise in comic bravery and, it must be said, self-ridicule, it was unsurpassable. If ever proof were needed that Victoria Wood doesn't take herself, or indeed her body, too seriously, then you only needed to see how tightly she was crammed into her one-piece (and I'd been wondering why no press photographers were allowed in). That, I'm afraid, sealed it. An education.

Royal Albert Hall, London SW1 (0171-859 8212) to 6 Oct

TELEVISION All Rise for Julian Clary, Friday, BBC2

Alas! poor Julian, his jokes are beginning to wear as thin as a moth-eaten party frock. By Jasper Rees

How long can Julian Clary keep it up? His act depends as much on his Dorian Gray looks as his ability to innuendo his way out of a hole (and indeed into one). You can see his future mapped out to resemble the fate of a glamorous actress: as the wrinkles cluster around the neck, the phone stops ringing. When the beauty fades, he might end up being ushered to the margins as quickly as Norman Lamont, the butt of the infamous quip that cost Clary the job to die for of hosting *The Generation Game*.

All Rise for Julian Clary is the latest vehicle to be assembled to his specifications. After one outing, it's already come down with format fatigue, the curse of so many shows that chase the rainbow of novelty. It's embarrassing just to have to explain it, let alone present it. But what happens is that our host sits in judgement over members of the public who bring their squabbles to him.

First up was a man who accused his female neighbours of forcing him to enter a gardening contest. The case was generously endowed with pointless frivolity, and jarred alarmingly with a more genuine dispute between two friends who had fallen out after one of them ended their singing partnership.

The monstrosity of the set works hard to underscore a general air of clumsiness. Far too grand for Clary's purposes, it obliges him to go on long, lonely walks between the two benches that seat the disputants. Perched in what would be his judge's chair in any normal court is his bewigged sidekick Frank Thornton, who's presumably desperate for the money. His presence is an indirect reminder of the days when Clary's spiritual ancestor John Inman played the nation's least threatening homosexual. Not much has changed since Inman's day: the jokes are perhaps more risqué now (as a judge, Clary says he's "more rump than pole")

and these days his guests know the form. In every sense playing the straight man, one knowingly described his two bedrooms as "front and back".

Like Inman, Clary's humour works best when he's hemmed in by diehard heteros, whom he makes the targets of his putdowns. Whatever the opposite of a fig bag is, he's it. (A bet hen?) It's telling that the weakest part of the show came when he had Lionel Blair on: Clary is at his least funny when bouncing gags off the almost-as-camp. That would count as friendly fire, whereas his gungshots are aimed squarely on the naffly dressed enemy.

Blair was taking part in the "Celebrities to the Hebrides" slot, in which the famous stand accused of whoring themselves around shows precisely like this one. It would be too ghastly to see it happen, but we oughtn't to rule out Clary's own mutation from host to perpetual guest chasing the next cheque.

POETRY Linton Kwesi Johnson, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London

The king of dub poetry has turned his thoughts to love. Is he mellowing with age? Michael Glover listens up

John La Rose, veteran Caribbean poet and publisher was laughing fit to bust a gut as he made his way into the Queen Elizabeth Hall with a few old friends on Wednesday. "You know," he said as we all jostled our way forward in a partyish mood. "I've never seen Linton around a woman. He used to say: 'First of all, I have to go home and wash my clothes.' Every one guffawed a bit harder. ... and now I hear he's writing love poems."

That fragment of insider information was the first shock of the night: to hear that Linton Kwesi Johnson, Associate Fellow of Warwick University, Honorary Fellow of Wolverhampton Polytechnic, and author of "Mi Revaluashanary Pren", "Di Great Insofrockshan" and much else, might, at the age of 44, no longer be using words primarily as incendiary devices.

The second shock happened on the stage itself. A dapper gentleman suddenly appeared in a crisp beige suit, sans hat, carrying a rolled-up poster. He looked

sleek and suave enough to be any thinking man's idea of a croupier's croupier. And he both did - and did not - resemble Linton Kwesi Johnson.

"I'm sorry," he said, "but Linton Kwesi Johnson couldn't be here tonight. I'm substituting him." Then he unrolled the poster that was wallpapering the foyer. "Just look at this," he said, snapping at it contemptuously with his finger nail. It was a giant image of Linton in profile, with that little jutting goatee beard, and the famous trilby hat cocked back at a chirpy angle to any ignorant white policeman's ideas of truth and justice. "Just read what it says here: 'The heart and soul of Jamaica music.' How ridiculous can you get!"

And that's precisely what we didn't get. Instead Linton Kwesi Johnson - yes, it was he - gave us an evening of sleek, well rehearsed examples of product from LKJ, his own record label: 20 minutes of Linton Kwesi Johnson reading his poems unaccompanied; half an hour from his reg-

ular accompanists, the eight-piece Dennis Bovell Dub Band; and a final 45 minutes of Linton (in that trilby now) and the band.

The dullist bit came first: to hear LKJ perform unaccompanied draws too much attention to the limitations of a writer who has no qualms whatsoever about rhyming "cabbage" with "knowledge". On the other hand, to hear him perform with a band as tight and as well rehearsed as Dennis Bovell's is an entirely different experience: now the rhetorical force of all this powerful sloganeering gains from the persuasive energies of the music and the words in combination with each other.

Linton underestimates his role in all this with that unsmiling, dead-pan delivery of his as he shuffles backwards from the microphone, pumping his arms like the pistons of some old-fashioned steam train. Now he has transformed himself into a really engaging performer; but none of this has much to do with well crafted poetry - or whether or not he is speaking the truth.

CLASSICAL MUSIC Roberto Gerhard / Nash Ensemble, Wigmore Hall, London

Nicholas Williams is impressed by a 100th anniversary tribute to a composer who answered the turbulence of the 20th century with musical moderation

Is it possible to learn about a composer's mind from our experience of his music?

The sound may reveal more than the photographic image. The cover of the Nash Ensemble's Roberto Gerhard 100th anniversary programme at the Wigmore Hall on Wednesday showed a man at a desk, a metronome poised in the foreground, smoke curling up from a cigarette. An intense, introspective sort of face. Apart from its own remoteness from the camera, it gave little away.

There were more of Gerhard's passions displayed in the music, though passionate isn't quite the word for the work of this figure whose life bore its 20th-century scars of exile. A refugee from Franco, he ended his days in Cambridge, yet he had little to do with the university. Earlier, he had studied the Spanish folksong style with Felipe Pedrell and the serial method with Arnold Schoenberg, gaining fluency in both, yet retaining his own sense of ambivalent detachment. In his last decade, the 1960s, he followed the path of Varèse and became fascinated with electronic sounds. But he also kept his links with the familiar world of the modern orchestra.

Detachment, it seems, was to him a kind of *idée fixe*. Despite his interest in the strange and the untested, by nature he stood on the cliff top, surveying the tempest from above. This might also be called undogmatic, and his story appeals to reasonable people on account of his evident humanity and aversion to extremes. There were symptoms of disengagement even in a set of early songs: the *Cançonero de Pedrell*, sung by soprano Rosemary Hardy

with a line-up of harp, piano, percussion and octet. Like a Spanish version of the *Songs of the Aveugles*, each item implied a delicious tale that was illustrated with ravishing music. But there seemed a lack of involvement in the text. Gerhard was not overmuch concerned for the fate of his folksong characters.

Seven excellently performed French haiku offered ideal material for this kind of approach. The accompaniment of wind quartet and piano had terse, almost graphic images to partner the soprano through each fragment. "I caressed your floating stream" brought forth bubbling flute and clarinet; the "Black-edged thought at the bottom of my cocktail of oblivion" was echoed by bassoon and clarinet grumbling around in their lowest register.

Two late pieces grew most strongly from the roots of Gerhard's character. The nervous, quirky *Concert for Eight*, with mandolin, guitar and accordion, showed a mind devoted to detail and removed from extramusical events. *Leo*, his last work, was an emblematic portrayal of fortitude. An ebullient rising phrase on violin and trumpet said "energy" whenever it appeared. The music remained manly in its repression of direct expression until the late arrival of a clarinet folk-theme, delicately played by Michael Collins. Gerhard had partnered the work with another piece, *Libra*, his own star sign, which is much to the point. He was a man who weighed everything in the balance; a sensitive man who gave everything its worth. One felt it in the music of this polished tribute, along with the sense that the composer himself was getting his fair due.



THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Adrian Turpin

THE MOVIE

MULTIPLICITY

THE PLAY

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?

THE EXHIBITION

MAPPLETHORPE

overview

What do you do when your home life suffers because you're always at the office? Get cloned, of course. Four clones share the screen with Michael MacDowell in this new comedy Harold 'Groundhog Day' Ramis.

critical view

Ryan Gilbey was unimpressed. "It's nothing more than another showcase for Keaton's slim talents." "Four clones prove no funnier than one," opined the *Times*. "Groundhog Day" was developed with surprising warmth and inventiveness. *Multiplicity* opts for a subtle and is often mean-spirited. "First of all," says Keaton, "I was more interested in describing the film as a comedy about cloning, mortality and the roads not taken. The development is funny and smart." The *Guardian* remained on the look-out for a group sex scene.

on view

112 mins, cert 12. They should have called it *Multiplicity*

Battle is engaged nightly at the Almeida, Islington, London N1 (0171-359-4404) to 26 Oct

our view

Dazzling psychological critique of a workaholic society? Hardly. Those responsible should go forth and multiply.

Howard Davies's revival confirms that Albee's play is one of the most exhilarating and cathartic experiences post-war theatre has to offer

KEY

EXCELLENT

GOOD

OK

POOR

DEADLY

critical view

"Given his reputation, the imagery of Mapplethorpe's pictures now seem almost shockingly devoid of sexual intensity," missed Andrew Graham-Dixon. "He was too good as a sometimes photographer, but he is a very good one," he concluded. "By doing too soon, he degraded contemporary photography of any serious quality. Vision which, until now, was a rare and precious thing." *The Times* (see also the *Daily Telegraph*). "He reduced his male models to grotesque caricatures, degrading and dehumanising them."

on view

In conjunction with the Anthony Gamble exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, London SE1, to 17 Nov

our view

Had the artist lived a different life, the semi-religious quality of his work might have been noted more often. His truest desire was for self-transcendence

Next Week in the Arts

Monday: Steve Reich reveals the trick of making a little go a long way.
Tuesday: Andrew Graham-Dixon casts an eye over the Rachel Whiteread show.
Wednesday: Paul Taylor joins the party as the Royal Court bids farewell to Sloane Square.
Thursday: Chris Peachment meets Michael Winterbottom, the director of *Jude*.
Friday: Michael Church takes a musical trip down the Volga

Portrait of the artist as a scrofulous gargoyle

A new biography of the hermitic Nobel laureate is a triumph of scholarship and sympathy. By John Walsh

Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett by James Knowlson, Bloomsbury, £25

As a child it was Samuel Beckett's habit of fling himself out of trees. He would climb to the top of a 60-foot fir and launch himself at the ground, relying on the lower branches to break his fall, and clambering back up until stopped by his long-suffering mother. James Knowlson's biography reveals that the grown-up Beckett was also obsessively keen on perilous diving, in swimming pools, off cliffs, in dreams. It is piquant to consider Beckett, the most hermitic figure of 20th-century literature, as a kind of prototypical bungee jumper.

But one of the joys of Knowlson's biography is to present a whole gallery of Becketts we never knew. There's Beckett the best man, for instance, at his friend Geoffrey Thompson's wedding in 1935 (he thought it would be a registry office job and was horrified to discover a full church social was planned.) There's Beckett the actor, arriving on the Trinity College stage in a long white Father Time beard in George Bernard Shaw's *Le Malin*; Beckett the roller-skater (he was so inept, the management thought he was drunk and threw him out); Beckett the Arcadian piper, tweeting on a rusty tin whistle in Paris; Beckett the artist's model, embarrassedly posing for "a lot of bloody virgin squaws" in Hamburg; Beckett the aspirant film director, writing to Sergei Eisenstein asking for a job at Moscow's State Institute of Cinematography.

And there's Beckett the ladies' man. Though far from an obvious Romeo – catatonically shy, mortifyingly silent – he managed to draw to his angular side an extraordinary number of high-spirited and independent women with whom he would fall hopelessly in love, spend unconscionable hours agonising about whether to have sex with them, and leave them bewildered. He usually spelt disaster: Joyce's daughter Lucia fell in love with him and, when politely rejected, went mad; his sexy cousin Peggy died of consumption; his favourite co-student, Ethna MacCarthy, nearly died when Beckett crashed his car into a bridge. An obsessed Peggy Guggenheim wrote ominously in her diary, "I love being with him. It is more and more my real life. I have decided now to give up everything else even sex if necessary and concentrate on him". It's characteristic that, when he met Suzanne Deschevaux-Dumesnil, the best he could say about her was, "As we both know that it will come to an end, there is no knowing how long it may last". It lasted 50 years.

The Beckett you expect to find – solitary, tormented, epically miserable, glacially brilliant but with a curious gift for silent friendship – is here too, every move of his 85 years exhaustively documented through 850-odd pages, every allusion in his letters, every name and character and glancing reference in the prose and plays and poetry from *Proust* to *Comment Dire*. James Knowlson, the distinguished director of the Beckett Literary Archive at Reading, has been steeped in the works and in every literary-critical posture visited on the Beckett canon in the last 20 years, and presents us here with a tremendous act of elucidation and synthesis, ballasted with hitherto unseen diaries (such as those from the lost years of arduous wandering in Germany in 1936-7) and underpinned by the bonus of Beckett's own plain reminiscences.

Beckett was born into a prosperous family of south Dublin Protestants, descended from Quaker land surveyors and mill owners on his mother's side and a clan of sport-obsessed builders on his father's. He had a notably untraumatic childhood filled with boisterous relations, and summer holidays in a Wicklow fishing village. Beckett's mother, May, later to be his scourge and heartbreak,



Beckett: rejecting Joyce's light in favour of failure and ignorance

Photograph: Bruce Davidson/Magnum

organised dog shows for the Parish Church of Foxrock; his father, Bill, was a bluff, non-intellectual clubman and quantity surveyor, keen on brisk walks and bridge parties. The precocious schoolboy became the cricketing super-student at Trinity, went to Paris and became an acolyte and amanuensis of James Joyce – then abruptly gave up teaching, and worked at melancholia full-time. The personality that comes off these pages is intriguing but hard to love. A taciturn and solitary child (at kids' parties, he'd hide in the outhouses), Beckett became a moody and withdrawn adolescent, an unengaged teacher, a reluctant academic, a diffident lover, an intense and brooding presence in drawing-rooms from London to Munich. Though he underwent two years' treatment for it, he could

never explain what caused the characteristic air of bitter *weltschmerz* that he carried from his youngest days. Knowlson points out that Beckett's sufferings weren't just psychological: his brand of depression made him unable to walk at times, while his constitution was chronically under siege from pleurisy, cysts, boils, septic fingers, night sweats and what he called a "bursting heart" (He looked, he wrote in 1930, "like a scrofulous gargoyle"). He was a walking psychopathology lab. His friend Geoffrey Thompson said that the key to understanding him was to be found in his relationship with his mother who developed into a guilt-making termagant, chronically embarrassed by her son. But it was she who subsidised his therapy sessions in Paris and chastised him for leaving his teaching post and writing filth.

His reply was to travel around Europe, soaking up the cultural movements of the Thirties with such demented acquisitiveness, one is forced to wonder if the roots of his art lay, not in transcending the various movements of post-modernity, but in something simpler. "I wish we could meet and talk," he once wrote to his friend, Tom MacGreavy, "before I become inarticulate or eloquently suave". Suavity, sociability, good manners, all held a kind of horror for him – not only because they suggested a formal bogusness, but because he was no good at them, preferring art and his own intellect.

When his brother Frank got married, Beckett complained about "the awful unconscious social cynicism that knows that what the relationship comes down to in the end is gongs and tea-trolleys"; alongside this familiar attitude-striking is the cry of an excluded soul. After an evening with German artists and Russian aristocrats, he wrote: "I am always depressed and left with a sense of worthlessness at the beautifully applied energy of these people... In comparison I am utterly alone and without purpose, alone and pathologically indolent and limp and opinionless and consternated... This absurd diary with its list of pictures, serves no purpose, is only the act of an obsessional neurotic".

"This absurd diary" refers to the notebook he always kept, listing the names of works he'd seen in galleries. Knowlson takes these neurotic inscriptions very seriously, faithfully clocking up every Caspar David Friedrich or van Ruysdael landscape seen, every book read, every performance attended. The biography's energy level falls in these cut-off years. It's as much a relief to the reader as it clearly was for Beckett when the war supervenes and, shaken by Nazi censorship of his friends' "decadent" works, he elected to join in the French war effort.

Knowlson's chapters on Beckett's war – spent, first, translating for a Resistance cell in Paris, then in nervous retreat in Roussillon, in the rural Vaucluse, with his wife-to-be Suzanne and a cast of expatriates – are the best in the book, a vivid evocation of enforced simplicity and small-town rumourings, of chess and frugal meals and chat in the Escoffier cafe in the middle of a war zone.

The heart of this biography, though, is its attempt to discover "how the arrogant, disturbed, narcissistic young man of the early 30s could possibly have evolved into someone who was noted later for his extraordinary kindness, courtesy, concern, generosity and almost saintly 'good works'". Knowlson's answer is that the war and its aftermath pulled him out of his solipsistic stupor and substituted genuine feeling for metaphysical angst. Along with this came the famous "revelation" that's half-revealed in *Krapp's Last Tape*: "that the dark I have always struggled to keep under is in reality my most precious ally". This rejection of Joycean light and inclusiveness in favour of Beckettian failure, impotence and ignorance was crucial; in it he found the heart of his work, namely the Trilogy (*Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable*), and all the infinitely-paired texts and dramas that followed.

I'd quarrel with the title of this book (damned to fame? Beckett agonised about non-publication like the most *col-oratura* prima donna; he wanted an audience, if only to counter-balance his mother's disapproval) but nothing else. Its amplitude, its oceanic research and tireless intelligence, its pacing and verve and critical acuity mark it as one of the great post-war biographies. Whatever celestial or infernal zone he currently occupies, Beckett must be permitting himself a brief, wintry smile at last.

All you need to know about the books you meant to read

by Gavin Griffiths

THE TALE OF GENJI (1010? - 1020?) by the Lady Murasaki Shikibu

The summit of Japanese classical literature. *Genji* details both court and political life during the Heian period (794-1192).

Plot: The Emperor loves low-born Kintsubo. She gives birth to a son. The Emperor's jealous first wife persecutes Kintsubo to death. The boy is made Genji, or commoner, for his own protection. Much of the novel is consumed with Genji's pursuit of women. Among his many loves are the Emperor's latest mistress and a young girl, Murasaki, whom he adopts as a daughter. Genji flirts with incest. His amatory appetite creates political difficulties. The Emperor's wives, mistresses and ministers conspire against him. Genji embraces self-exile in Suma. Here he matures. His son is subjected to a dry, academic schooling as Genji learns the value of discipline. The new Suzaku Emperor persuades Genji to marry his third daughter. Genji's child-wife Murasaki feels displaced. She dies slowly of grief, hoping for rebirth in paradise. Genji never recovers: at 52 he believes his life is finished. Abruptly the last section of the book opens with Genji's death. The rest of the book concerns Genji's grandson Naoe and friend Kaoru. They both love Ukifune. She is a sacrificial victim who cannot choose between her suitors. She tries to drown herself; fails, is reborn and becomes a "nun".

Theme: The Emperor's passion for Genji's low-born mother initiates the world into a cycle of sinful desire. Genji's loves bring him little happiness. Most of the

women must be content with misery.

Style: The first two-thirds is lucid and elegant with discrete twitches of irony. The Ukifune episodes are more impassioned.

Chief strengths: All the action takes place without chairs and in paper houses. Murasaki's world is entirely alien and makes most fantasy novels appear conventional. The modern Western reader must reappraise notions of sexuality and morality. The rituals that mask ferocious feeling find no counterpart in the European tradition.

Chief weaknesses: The book is twice as long as *War and Peace*. Rather too often, characters settle down to a minutely described cup of tea and listen to the twittering of nightingales. What they thought of it then: Murasaki Shikibu was famed in her lifetime. Court diarists record difficulty in obtaining manuscripts of the text. By the 12th century, 'Genji' was a recognised classic.

What we think of it now: In Japan, much work in recent times has been spent on establishing a "clean" text and the correct order of chapters. Translated by Arthur Waley in 1933, the book was faintly patronised by Virginia Woolf who felt that it wasn't quite as good as *Proust*.

Responsible for: The Japanese literary tradition. Modern greats such as Tanizaki and Kawabata continued to explore the relationship between illicit passion and decorum.

Adventures of the secret seven

John Rentoul delves into contemporary Labour history

Faces of Labour: The Inside Story by Andy McSmith, Verso, £16

The author of this rather eccentric collection of seven mini-biographies, of people who have featured in one way or another in the history of the Labour Party since 1979, wisely invokes the model of Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*. For although McSmith has a fine turn of sharp wit, the fascination of his book lies more in his attention to revealing detail. You can dip into this book at any point, and be surprised and engrossed by some of the more baroque curiosities of contemporary Labour history.

The book consists of portraits of Neil Kinnock, David Blunkett, Clare Short, Peter Mandelson and Tony Blair. We've heard of them. However, it also includes chapters on Ted Grant, the founder of Militant, and Jim Murray, an engineering union shop steward who once tilted a crucial block vote at a Labour Party conference.

The late Mr Murray's claim to significance is particularly tenuous. His was the "swing" vote on the engineering union delegation to the 1979 conference which tilted it 18-16 in favour of "mandatory reselection" of MPs. Thus Labour MPs were required to submit themselves to a selection process in between every election. It was a key demand of the left, but in fact the principle was accepted by the many of the right. Blair, for example, has always supported it.

But the book does not attempt to analyse the ideologies of the Labour Party, preferring to mock the "scientific" certainties of Militant, rather than assess why it gained such a grip on the party it infiltrated.

David Blunkett is an interesting choice of subject and McSmith is blunt about his erratic political record. He tells the story of Blunkett's failed attempt before the last election to devise an alternative to the poll tax without going back to the rates, and his entanglement with Bryan Gould's campaign against European monetary union. Each time, "Blunkett escaped the political consequences" and went on to be the first of the 1987 intake, with Mo Mowlam, to be elected to the shadow Cabinet. Blunkett is likely to be an important figure in a Labour government.

Blunkett is opposed to political correctness, opposed to the "promotion" of homosexuality, and supports cutting benefits for young people who refuse training places. Clare Short is a less successful choice. Unfortunately for McSmith, she was

demoted to overseas development spokeswoman just as his book went to press, and would therefore be less important in a Labour government than hitherto thought. Her falling out with Blair is an important episode which sheds much light on the nature of the "new Labour" beast, but could not be covered here.

Most significant, perhaps, is the chapter on Peter Mandelson, Labour's original spin doctor and Blair's closest confidant. McSmith and Mandelson do not get on, a fact which is advertised on the back cover of the book, which quotes Mandelson's view of the author: "One of the most biased, ill-informed, malicious and unpleasant journalists in Westminster".

But the chapter is a balanced and slightly bloodless account of someone who arouses stronger feelings than almost any other Labour politician. McSmith debunks what he calls "the myth of Peter Mandelson" quite effectively, without fully explaining his extraordinary influence with two different Labour leaders: Kinnock and Blair.

Again, the detail is fascinating. McSmith quotes – damagingly – from a telephone conversation with Mandelson during the Labour leadership election in 1994, when McSmith was the only journalist to report Mandelson's secret role in Blair's campaign. Mandelson pleaded with him not to mention his name: "He even suggested that if I wanted to damage him, I might prefer to write about how his relationship with Gordon Brown had broken down."

McSmith quotes from a letter Mandelson wrote to Charles Clarke, Kinnock's chief of staff, at the time of the Monmouth by-election campaign, which Mandelson ran in 1991. Clarke had obviously told him that he could not work for the party again until the general election. "I am presently trying to put my bruised feelings aside," wrote Mandelson. "I think I can contribute more in the same way, in a quiet, tactful, reasonable way... I know you don't share this view."

This picture of Mandelson as a highly emotional man begs for a fuller account. No doubt we shall get one if and when Mandelson joins Blair's Cabinet. Meanwhile this is a highly readable, if somewhat arbitrary, collection which shines unpredictable shafts of light on the background to Labour's incoherent identity on the threshold of assuming power.

The Dr Who history of Britain

Roy Strong has a cliché for every occasion. By Felipe Fernandez-Armesto

The Story of Britain by Roy Strong, Hutchinson, £35

In the next remake of *Doctor Who*, Sir Roy Strong should get the star role. *The Story of Britain* is a trailer for his talents. Beamed down against a back-drop of Stonehenge, he strikes a robotic pose for the back-cover photo, kitted out in the pillage of intergalactic conflict from the old BBC wardrobe: the Carnaby-cut coat and coiffure, the death-ray glint of the spectacles, Darth Vader's gloves, the Doctor's own paisley neckwear, and flying-saucer buttons recycled from Dalek armour. Inside the book, Sir Roy attempts a feat of compression worthy of the Tardis – a journey through 23 centuries in 600 glossy pages.

His treatment of the past is in the finest Time Lord tradition: infantile, episodic and starchy-eyed. Like his predecessors in the role, the new Who addresses an audience of children in a squirmingly childish style. Though he calls the book "an introduction for anyone of any age", its kitsch cover and embarrassing patriotism are obviously aimed at godparents and maiden aunts in search of a safe Christmas present. Secure in the knowledge that recipients will leave it unread, Sir Roy has not bothered to write well.

"Britain is an island," he proclaims in the first four words, and the same level of originality and interest is sustained throughout. "One thing is certain," we are told in the final dazzling platitude, the present "too will pass away as yet another chapter unfolds in the unending story of Britain". There is a cliché of every crisis. "Dotted with gracious villas... Roman Britain was to be seen hanging by a thread... Not *Angli* but *Angli*... So it was that by the eighth century a new society, deeply Christian, had come into being... Nothing was quite the same after 1066... The earth was flat... A new era dawned... There then followed a tumultuous period... The gauntlet was thrown down to the Pope... Gloriana's England... Sands of time running out... New middle classes... The Industrial Revolution lay ahead... Lady with the Lamp... An empire on which the sun never set... The clock could not be put back... Their finest hour... The tide was flowing... In the end, 'Britain's declining industrial heritage came home to roost with a vengeance.' Er, that's it.

There are some better moments. The banalities are interspersed with crisply reproduced pictures and some competent vignettes. The pen-portraits of Strong's

heroes show how enthusiasm can dispel indolence to produce shrewd and concise accounts of Capability Brown, for instance, and William Wilberforce. But even when the author manages to get his facts right and his prose pithy, his judgements seem weirdly warped. The chapter on the Victorian era is subtitled "The Classless Society" and we never get far, in the past as Strong sees it, from apple-cheeked arcady.

Despite the title, this book is emphatically about English history. The Welsh and Scots appear only to be conquered, or otherwise to defer to the greatness of the Union. We need good histories of England. To other peoples, the English are a fearful crowd who have been dangerously effective in spreading their empires, their institutions, their language and their games. This gives them an irresistible claim on the world's attention; but, between "British Studies" and "European Studies", English history is being squeezed from syllabuses and shelves.

I had hoped Roy Strong would have the talent and energy to restore it to its rightful place. He is, in his own gawky characterisation, "a lower-middle-class boy who made his way upwards through hard work and scholarship to join the ranks of the professional classes who now control the destiny of this country". Years ago, he made genuinely important and insightful contributions to the rehabilitation of court history. He still has wonderful bursts of constructive *espièglerie* – seizing a pair of shears, for instance, to wrest Platonic forms from the Prince of Wales's topiary, or titillating readers of *Country Life* with well-observed evocations of Maine Coone cats. My revulsion for his book is the product of outraged expectations. *The Story of Britain* is a self-inflicted offence which no admirer will easily forgive. Let us hope, for his sake, that it will be quickly forgotten, or, at worst, lightly adapted into future scripts for *Doctor Who*.

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Embracing his Argentinian side

Antonia Logue welcomes a narrative master

The Story of the Night by Colm Tóibín, Picador, £15.99

War, love and South America: the novel by Andrew Lloyd Webber? Well, not quite. As far from squeaky musicals as he is from García Márquez's magic realism, Colm Tóibín in his third novel moves beyond anything he has done before: the Irish high court judge in *The Heather Blazing*, the Irish woman gathering her life together in *Fifties Spain* in *The South*, his first novel.

In content, his new novel could scarcely be more different. In style, however, he remains exactly the same: terse and spare, whatever the odds.

The Story of the Night is set in Argentina in the Eighties. The narrator, Richard Garay, lives with his ageing English mother, who in turn lives in a fictional British Empire, replete with all the coarse iconography and devotion to Thatcher that comes from doty jingoism. Richard is gay and teaches English for a living, but his daily life contains little more than casual sex with strangers and a fruitless crush on one of his pupils.

Then his mother dies, and suddenly the Falklands War arrives and departs within a matter of pages. After the war, Richard becomes involved with an American espionage couple who introduce him to all sorts of US oil-investors with a very specific political agenda: the privatisation of Argentinian oil.

Suddenly he's rich, wearing suits, and being seduced – the classic American Eighties yuppie in a country raped blindfold by political corruption and savagery.

At exactly the point he chooses to embrace his Argentinian paternity, Richard evolves into both its antithesis and personification – a fact which is brought clearly

home to him at an elite party given by the Americans, when he discovers that a former classmate he thought had dropped out of college had in fact been dropped out of a plane, drugged, somewhere over the ocean, one of Argentina's Disappeared ones.

Richard is saved from the consequences of a lifetime's unhappy sexual ambivalence by Pablo, brother of the tauntingly heterosexual Jorge, the pupil on whom he had such a crush. By falling deeply in love he abandons the constraints of his life hitherto, and repatriates his identity, not through Argentina, but through his emotional fulfilment.

Tóibín's most consummate skill as a writer has long been his gift for pacing a narrative. This is achieved through more than structural finesse – both tone and subtle details of character are used like fine wire to bind ideas together. Moments that teeter on the edge of triteness are saved by Tóibín's use of language. What begins as a story of political, social, and emotional isolation becomes a narrative of inclusion: the story of a much wider society.

The novel is filled with explicit sexual encounters, but the detached, precise narration never wavers, even when describing a grapple in a sauna. It's a style which initially affords the reader little chance of warming to the central character, but through this arm's-length approach Tóibín manipulates and confounds the reader's judgement.

The intellect which has so conspicuously powered Tóibín's writing career is fired here with a new ambition and purpose. Few doubted that Tóibín had a great novel in him; the surprise is that it has come so soon.

Visions from a speeding car

William Trevor's stories offer domestic nightmares stifled by good manners. Clare Boylan reports

After Rain by William Trevor, Viking, £16

When 16-year-old Milton Leeson has a vision of a saint at his family's farm in Armagh, it unleashes an unholy chain of consequence. Is the boy "away in the head", like his two brothers (one a UVF terrorist, the other a victim of Down's Syndrome)? It is scarcely relevant, for Milton is a Protestant, the son of a stalwart loyalist family who view this popish excess as a disease at the very heart of their values. The small, eccentric episode brews up into a chapter of monumental horror which forever after must be contained and guarded within the family. In typical Trevor style, the saint is not even a radiant or consoling vision, but a lean-faced woman with wasted features and lips dry as a bone. "Milton had the distinct impression that the woman wasn't alive."

With his ninth short story collection, William Trevor shows himself as a master of domestic horror. In his fictional world, the anguished cry of the dispossessed comes out as a suffocated sigh, as in a nightmare. Emotions are stifled by manners, terror parcelled up in platitudes. The settings for his tales are homely ones, cosy with flagged kitchens or Formica counters. But home is not a safe place. Behind closed doors, people live lives of quiet happiness or despair, and within their own walls unspeakable horrors scuttle around. In "Gilbert's Mother" a woman lives with the growing certainty that her secretive son is a vicious criminal. Is he a rapist and murderer or merely an ineffectual creep terrorising his only victim? "She had felt the tug of his lips on her breasts, a helpless creature then, growing into the one who controlled her, who made her isolation total." "Timothy's Birthday" brings a visit from the rough-trade boyfriend of their only son to a devoted elderly couple in a decaying Irish country house. With true Trevor subtlety, it is not the low-life youth who is sinister; he is just a



Trevor: his dialogue distils "pure truth from provocation"

harmless petty delinquent who becomes the uneasy observer of the ruin he has brought to two innocent people. The nemesis is the gay son, poisonously resentful of his parents' excluding love for one another.

Not all are horror tales. Some are almost-love stories, poignant studies of stifled lives briefly lit by gleams of affection. "The Potato Dealer" tells of an arranged marriage between a pregnant girl and a dealer with "eyes that were small and sharp as splinters". It is a bleak bargain, paid for by the girl's uncle, without sentiment or any sexual con-

tent. When the mercenary husband is surprised by pleasure in the child that is born, he stows this happiness furtively and then watches helplessly as it is snatched away. "The Piano Tuner's Wives", tells of a blind man whose world was warmly coloured by an amiable first wife and then vandalised by a jealous successor.

Trevor is a skilled purveyor of quiet menace. No purple prose pumps up the sense of dread in "Lost Ground", the gem of this collection, and the longest of the stories. There is no melodrama, only a deadening sense of

reflected dread in the almost-sprightly account of a loyalist march on a Catholic area. "As the marchers melodiously advanced upon the blank stare of so many windows, the stride of the men acquired an extra fervour."

No diamond comes without flaws. Trevor is ill-at-ease with the street language of the young. Words like "mega", and "naff" fall slightly off-centre. Least successful are the gentler stories, in which the author's admirably controlled prose sometimes lacks exactitude and has a faded quality, like an exquisite garment washed too often. In the title story, a woman on holiday in Italy to recover from a broken love affair, has a moment of revelation which brings understanding and consolation. But the moment of light lacks the clarity to strike at the heart of the reader. "A Friendship" fails to justify the success of the revenge exacted by a pernickety husband on his unfaithful wife and her colourful girlfriend. This is tricky Jane Austen territory and the outcome of the story really hangs on power, and not love, as the author asserts. In "A Day", a woman drinks her way from despair to optimism with the fantasy that her husband's infidelity will bring a child, which she will adopt. This has strong echoes of the masterful "Access to the Children", (from an early collection) in which a divorced man, drink-soaked and shambolic, imagines that each access day will reunite the happy family that once was his. But the new story lacks the force and focus of the earlier one, lapsing into unconscious comedy as the sozzled wife tries to assemble dinner.

Overall, these interludes come as a respite more than a disappointment. Trevor is a consummate elegant writer whose dialogue distils pure truth from provocation and whose amiable prose snaps like a trap upon the mind of the lulled reader, leaving you like someone witnessing, from a speeding car, awful events that will stay with you forever.

Repo man seeks love, Belfast area

Susie Boyt reads a tale of romance and violence in the Ulster ceasefire

Eureka Street by Robert McLiam Wilson, Secker, £14.99

"Searing", "as fresh as an open wound", "it goes straight for the jugular" are how Robert McLiam Wilson's first two novels, *Ripley Bogle* and *Manfred's Pain* were described. His third, *Eureka Street*, certainly has a strong thread of violence running through it – its Ulster setting, complete with bombings and beatings ensures this – but what is most striking about it is its absolute faith in romance. "All stories are love stories" we are told at the book's beginning, a surprising first line for a tale set in Belfast in the six months leading up to the ceasefire. Yet Wilson presents a Belfast where all aspects of life are heightened, all chances must be snatched, because if terrible things can happen without a moment's warning, then per-

haps wonderful things can too.

Wilson's novel has two friends as heroes and the chapters take turns in telling their overlapping stories. Jake is Catholic, handsome, vicious and acutely sentimental. Recently separated from his girlfriend Sarah, he is desperate for love. The succession of barmaids, shop workers and waitresses that catch his eye move his hungry heart to such an extent that he immediately fancies himself in love with them. Yet he never quite gets anywhere with these women, at the last moment taking great offence at something they say or fail to say, pushing them away at the very point he wants them most. This sort of delicacy is quite at odds with Jake's day job as a repossession man. Every day, he and his

toughish co-workers raid the grim estates of Belfast in the early morning when people's resistance is at its lowest.

Jake's fat and ugly protestant friend Chuckie Lurgan's life turns around when he meets a beautiful, rich American girl. Realising she's the kind of girl you need money for, he pulls off a huge mail-order dildo scam, invests the proceeds in even less reputable ventures and suddenly finds himself a rich man.

The book follows the progress of these two men and their small circle: foul-mouthed twelve year old Roche, Lurgan's mother who scandalises the whole of Belfast by taking up with the woman over the road; Seán, Ted, Slat, Sloan and Lurgan's business partner who works his

way through all the girls in Belfast.

Wilson is at his least effective when he abandons this easy-going anecdotal style for something more poetic, a kind of heightened language in which a voice, both knowing and striving for answers, addresses the reader directly about what Belfast is and what it means. Wilson is so good at showing us things, such a natural story teller, that when he comes straight out and states what he thinks, it sounds weak and unsubtle. But this is only a small complaint. *Eureka Street* is a clever and witty book by a writer whose real talent is an ability to combine blind optimism and complete despair with a remarkable ease, as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world to do so.

GRAHAM JOYCE THE TOOTH FAIRY

It was as if a third force had entered the room. First there was him, and then there was the Tooth Fairy, and then she'd undressed and unleashed into the room this ravenous power, this insatiable maw; and he understood for the first time that one's initial impression of the locus of a person residing in their face, their eyes, their talking mouth was childish and staggeringly incorrect, that a brute third force was guiding and misguiding them. Voracious carnality lived and fed and thrived in the shadows, under the water. The insight tolled in him like a bell, and it made him afraid. He was paralysed by the vulgarity of the truth, but he understood dimly that what he was afraid of was life itself.

IAIN BANKS
on THE TOOTH FAIRY

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Paperbacks

Reviewed by Emma Hagestadt and Christopher Hirst

The Faber Book of Food ed by Spencer and Clifton (£11.99).

Anthologies come no better than this bountiful hamper of goodies. Its contents range from the *Wind* in the *Willows* picnic to Keith Talent's "napalm sauce" in *London Fields*, Coward on Christmas dinner in Jamaica, Waugh on an Ethiopian banquet and J K Jerome on Irish stew ("We had a discussion as to whether the rat should go in or not"). The section on "Killing for the Kitchen" should be avoided before meals.

Schliemann of Troy: Treasure and Deceit by David Traill (Penguin, £8.99) A self-made tycoon who took up archaeology in his mid-forties to satisfy a life-long obsession with

Homeric Troy, Heinrich Schliemann achieved worldwide celebrity through his amazing discoveries. Yet almost every aspect of his life was figured by falsehoods. Traill puts it down in part to showmanship: "an uncanny sense of what the public wanted to hear and an ability to satisfy that demand". In the end Schliemann's achievements are undeniable and his life-story is made all the more fascinating by his failings.

Muggeridge: The Biography by Richard Ingrams (HarperCollins, £7.99) Pithy and revealing, Ingrams has produced an entertaining portrait of this restless, waspish

talent. Muggeridge was as fearless in his sexual adventures (nickname: "The Pouncer") as in his journalism. Ingrams treats his subject's late-flowering evangelism kindly – but describes one outburst as "more than hypocritical" – and writes movingly about his "laughing, unfailing kindness and generosity". Another fine life of Muggeridge by Gregory Wolfe (Hodder, £9.99) gives far more details but lacks Ingrams' insights.

Who Goes Home by Roy Hattersley (Warner, £6.99) What a curious fellow R Hattersley is. So ponderous on the opposition front bench and prone to penning vast, unpick-upable novels like *The Maker's Mark* and *In That Quiet Earth*, yet these political reminiscences are lively, gossipy and packed with hilarious set-pieces. It is impossible not to warm to a man who comments that a ceramic phallus sent through the post must have come from a Tory, "for left-wingers usually chose to associate me with female genitalia."

The Missing by Andrew O'Hagan (Picador, £5.99) Why is it that the working classes don't pass down their family history like everyone else? In a stunning series of essays, Andrew O'Hagan delves into his own family's sketchy Glaswegian past and reflects how easy it is, and has always been, for people to "disappear". With nearly 25,000 "Misters" currently on police files, the book ends with a compelling account of Fred West's first marriage and his early career

cruising the Bridgeton area of Glasgow in a Mr Whippy van. One of the best non-fiction reads of the year.

The Bronski House by Philip Marsden (Flamingo, £6.99)

The farthest travel writer Philip Marsden ever got as a boy was Cornwall. But he always had a good idea of what "abroad" was like from visits to Zofia's house – an aristocratic Pole with a fund of tales of snow-laden forests, howling wolves and cheeses as big as cushions. As an adult, Marsden pieces together Zofia's story from family memoirs and diaries. Part *Dr Zhivago*, part travelogue, his books tell of a family whose lives were twice torn apart by revolution and war.

The Remarkable Journey of Miss Tranby Quirke by Elizabeth Ridley (Virago, £9.99)

Turn-of-the-century Camberwell is the setting for this compelling lesbian romance. Aware from an early age of her "inverted" sexual nature, Tranby Quirke has devoted her life to teaching and the suffragette cause. But when approached by a beautiful young woman for advice on the married state, it's not long before Miss Quirke's petticoats join the tea-cups by the fire. A gas-lit melodrama that wears its learning, and its strangeness, lightly. Jeanette Winterson for beginners.

Binding a genius with woolly strands

Lucy Hughes-Hallett reads the life of a woman of no substance

Emily Tennyson: The Poet's Wife by Ann Thwaite, Faber, £25

In 1855 Emily Tennyson remarked to the sculptor Thomas Woolner, who had designed a medallion bearing her portrait, that she had better "take to poisoning" to ensure good sales for him. Serial killers were ever-popular but few people, she guessed, would wish to buy an image of a poet's wife. Equally few, I imagine, will want to read her biography.

Ann Thwaite presents no compelling reason why we should do so. A pity, because this is in many ways an admirable book. Thwaite writes elegantly and marshals her enormous cast of Tennysons, hangers-on, friends, admirers, servants and correspondents with marvellous tact, ensuring that we get to know well those whom we need to know, and allowing others to fade discreetly away after making their contribution. She has a nice ironic wit which allows her to be simultaneously sceptical and affectionate in recording the variously wayward, pompous or venial goings-on of her subject's spouse, siblings, siblings-in-law and other relations and friends (never though of Emily herself: Emily is too good to require such treatment). Best of all she is able to write about love with a sympathetic energy that suffuses her book with emotional warmth. It is the story of a happy marriage (pace Edward Lear, who wrote that no one but his beloved friend Emily could have put up with Alfred Tennyson for more than a month). It is also, most markedly and delightfully, the account of a mother's required love for her children, a theme unaccountably rare in biography and about which Thwaite writes with tenderness and eloquence.

For all that, though, the book has a hollow centre. Emily, so fine, so gentle, so intelligent, so unassertive, remains shadowy. Thwaite is determined to rescue her reputation from those who have portrayed her either as an ineffectual invalid or as a conventional and excessively domestic woman who tamed and neutered Tennyson's genius, binding it, as Harold Nicolson put it, "with little worsted strands." Thwaite (a poet's wife herself) demonstrates how energetic and hard-working Emily really was, combining the roles (each of which would now be considered a stimulating and fulfilling one for a professional person of either sex) of a great author's

tutor, not to mention doing the arduous job of being his wife (ie housekeeper, hostess, counsellor, lover, and apologist to those he offended).

Her father, who had no sons, had given his daughters a boy's education. True, Emily, whose mysterious "ill-health" Thwaite guesses to have been caused by an unmentionable prolapse of the uterus, lay on a sofa, but while recumbent she wasn't doing anything fiddly with little bits of worsted, she was reading the works of Dante, Goethe and Virgil in the languages in which they were written. But though Thwaite demonstrates conclusively that there was more to Emily than has previously been allowed, she cannot build her up into a person worthy of the enormous amount of devoted attention Thwaite herself has given her, or even that Thwaite requires of her readers. For all her hard work and wide reading, Emily Tennyson is still the person of whose conversation Coventry Patmore could remember nothing except the words "Won't you stay to dinner?"

Her marriage to Tennyson was the great event of Emily's life: its long deferment her biographer's greatest difficulty. Thwaite quotes a letter from Alfred, one of the few to escape their son's censorship, written just before their correspondence was broken off for nearly ten years. It makes clear that Emily's later suggestion that lack of money kept them apart was misleading, probably deliberately so. "I fly thee for my good, perhaps for thine," he wrote. It seems he was as little capable of making up his mind to marry as he was of organising a holiday for himself. ("You will find him heavy to carry" wrote his friend William Brookfield to Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was contemplating a jaunt to France with him.) It was Emily who first declared her love (he wrote thanking her for taking an initiative for which he would not have had the courage), and probably Emily who first proposed. But though Thwaite does surely all that could be done to make sense of their agonisingly protracted courtship, it remains obscure. With commendable honesty she admits "we know very little," but that doesn't prevent her writing rather a lot, padding out the poorly-documented years of Emily's unmarried life with information of mind-boggling triviality and irrelevance (for

instance that in 1813 her father contributed three guineas towards the foundation of a village school).

Emily once wrote fondly to Lear that his long silences allowed her to be as much at ease with him as with "my old friends, the empty room, or the sofa in the corner." It appears that her husband felt much the same way about her, composing freely while she sat across from the hearth

from him, entirely undemanding. As Benjamin Jowett said, she had "hardly enough of self in her to keep herself alive." She certainly hasn't enough to keep alive this very long book. Repeatedly I found myself relieved by the entrance of some other person - Julia Margaret Cameron trailing across the lawn in her red and purple robes, Emily's sister, poor mad Louisa, scribbling cryptic notes of furious self-disgust in

her journal, little Hallam solemnly and hilariously recording in his diary his father's tantrums in continental hotels - anything to vary the tranquil monotony of Emily's company. Thwaite shrewdly remarks of Emily's sister-in-law, Matilda Tennyson, "she was it seems a 'character' and characters can be difficult to live with". True, but a character is a biographer's first requirement.



"Hardly enough of self in her to keep herself alive": Emily and Alfred Tennyson with their sons Hallam and Lionel in 1863

Photograph: The Reading Museum

The bishop who burbled into trouble

Should Lambeth Palace's most attractive tenant have spilt the beans? Michael de-la-Noy isn't convinced

Robert Runcie: The Reluctant Archbishop by Humphrey Carpenter, Hodder, £20

This is not the biography Lord Runcie wanted, but a man who "burbles for background" (his own words) into a tape recorder on the motorway, while being chauffeured by his Boswell, and then complains that his words have been "reproduced for substance", is not in a very strong position to object. The last thing a biographer wants is "background" (whatever that is) which he cannot use. The result of this ultimately, unhappy collaboration is an exercise in journalism, with endless verbatim conversations where paraphrase is called for, and a lot of extraneous information.

I have read and admired Carpenter's life of Auden, and his evocation of Evelyn Waugh and his chums, *The Brideshead Generation*, so I was not prepared for a tour of Lambeth Palace that might just past muster from the pen of a trainee reporter on the *Penge Gazette*. "An old-fashioned bell-pull summoned a friendly porter, who directed me under an arch into a big quadrangle." "The big door" was open, and inside "rose a big, ceremonial staircase." But then everything at Lambeth Palace seems to have been on a scale

to stun Mr Carpenter. He was taken into "a big drawing room" with "big windows." Amazingly enough, they "looked on to the garden."

Runcie's "burbles" about poor Lady Di being an actress and a schemer, and the heir to the throne having given up on the Church of England, seems somehow less sensational between hard covers than they did on the front page of the *Times* who paid Mr Carpenter £75,000 Runcie's breaches of confidence. But perhaps familiarity has bred contempt. After we have all passed our moral judgements about former archbishops who burble, what matters now is whether Runcie's tenure of office and his personality have been fairly and adequately dealt with.

As far as Runcie the man is concerned, I think they have. When invited to go to Canterbury, Temple, Fisher, Ramsey and Cogan did not hesitate for any shorter time than was seemly. Carey positively jumped at it. But in 1980, with no other serious contender in sight, Robert Runcie, then bishop of St Albans, made the Establishment hold its breath while he agonised for six weeks over his decision, partly because he regarded

himself as overrated by other people.

This makes him, always excepting William Temple, the most attractive successor to St Augustine this century. And, unsatisfactory though he finds this, his fourth, biography, he emerges from it as worldly and sophisticated, modest, amusing, without pomposity and, though a bit of a chameleon, essentially honest.

On the chameleon front, Carpenter could have probed more deeply into Runcie's ambiguous attitude towards homosexuality. In a notorious speech in the General Synod, not mentioned in the book, he once described homosexuals as emotional cripples. And what did he mean when he told Carpenter he had always been conscious that homosexuals might stab him in the back because he wasn't one of them?

Runcie's years at Canterbury were full of drama, and it is the sheer emotional impact of the visit of the Pope, the bloody split over women priests, the controversy about the Charismatic Movement (not referred to at all) that lie buried beneath these piles of tapes. But nuggets do emerge: a letter from the Queen's private sec-

retary congratulating Runcie on his controversial Falkland Islands sermon; and Runcie's bizarre hope that the Pope would agree to attend a Eucharist in Canterbury Cathedral.

While Runcie was archbishop, two major disasters occurred: the capture of Terry Waite and the suicide of Gareth Bennett. Carpenter lets Runcie off the book over his amazing lack of control of his staff, allowing Waite to rush in where any angel with a grain of commonsense would have headed the advice of the Foreign Office. But in the chapter dealing with the *Crockford's* Preface scandal and the death of Mr Bennett, Carpenter has researched well, filling in much previously missing information.

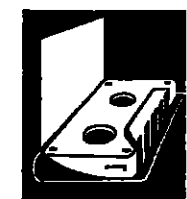
Although Carpenter thinks the MC is a medal (it is a decoration), and appears not to realise that Cyril Eastaugh ended up as bishop of Peterborough, his book is factually very reliable, and full of Runcie gems. How could one not forgive a lot of a man who found C.S. Lewis "too good to be true", describes John Selwyn Gummer as a religious know-all and the Rt Hon Baroness Thatcher, LG, OM as "The Hackshaw"?



Who's reading whom

Jonathan Raban finds a soap-opera to run and run in the O J Simpson trial

Fame, fame, fame dominated the O J Simpson case, although the majority of Americans still think the issue was race. Jeffrey Toobin's *The Run of His Life* (Random House US) shows the legal process played second fiddle to the cult of celebrity and that everyone connected with the trial - judge, jury, defence, prosecution, witnesses - were consumed by the desire to be famous. There is a brilliant description of Toobin visiting Judge Ito in his chambers. After some small talk Ito leaned conspiratorially towards Toobin. "Do you want to see something great?" he said. "Really great?" The "great" was nothing more than a letter from America's premier black talk-show host, but Ito was in raptures.



Death is Now My Neighbour read by Kevin Whately

The Pilgrim's Progress read by David Suchet

Kevin Whately reads Colin Dexter's latest Oxford thriller *Death is Now My Neighbour* (Macmillan, 3 hrs, £7.99), with a remarkably good take-off of John Thaw, and naturally makes a perfect Sergeant Lewis. Plenty of red herrings, bitching dons and cryptic clues.

What better tape for Chief Inspector Endeavour Morse's Jaguar than his childhood hero Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (Penguin, 3hrs, £7.99). David Suchet vaults in a breath from engagingly bucolic Christian to Mr Wordly-Wiseman's weary cynicism and the dread Apollyon's sibilantly evil hiss. Singing language and a quote a minute. Avoid other versions.

Christina Hardyment

Come back, Hob Hound of Edgley, all is forgiven

Sue Gaisford reads two warring accounts of radio's favourite agri-feminist soap

The Archers: The True Story by William Smethurst, Michael O'Mara, £16.99

The Archers: The Changing Face of Radio's Longest Running Drama by Vanessa Whitburn, Virgin, £14.99

We've had murder and suicide, rape and armed robbery, we've had incest and insanity, we've had Alzheimer's and adultery. No, really, we have, in our own isolated rural backwater. Our village shop, our bus service and even our pub have closed down and we seldom bump into our neighbours because we're always in cars. In comparison with this reality, Ambridge, for all its dramas, can sometimes seem like an idyll of gentle harmony, an impossible dream of peaceful co-existence.

William Smethurst would not agree. He worked on *The Archers* for 11 years, leaving it in 1986 to preside over the death of *Crossroads*. His history of Ambridge, *The Archers - The True Story* culminates in a furious denunciation of its current "mixture of violence, melodrama and sensation... a ferment of greed, sexual passion, family discord, racial hatred and rampant, radical feminism". And he doesn't stop there. He condemns many of its early writers, editors and story-lines in similarly savage terms and declares

that "Only during the Eighties" - when he was in charge - "was the programme different, attempting to engage listeners' interests".

And how did he do that? He thrilled them "with stories of the ghostly Hob Hound of Edgley; Nigel and Lizzie's love life; and the saga of the Over-Sixties missing tea money". Incidentally, he doesn't dwell on the other dramatic device with which his name is often associated, the story of the giant, exploding marrow.

There is precious little affection in this work. It is written in short, jerky chapters that bear a strange resemblance to familiar 15-minute episodes; they are full of jumbled stories and often end with portentous, mini cliff-hangers. "After Jennifer's Baby would come the story of What Happened to Jennifer's Baby" is one.

The most telling of these ends chapter 34. Underneath a rather scary photograph of himself he tells of the brief appearance and ignominious dismissal of an Ambridge character created after he left, whose name resembled his

own. This man "departed Ambridge, muttering and snarling, and was heard of no more".

The main problem is that, however much he mutters and snarls, Smethurst has not decided whether or not any of it really matters. Is it just a radio programme, or is it a sacred icon? Will people listen if it remains harmless, genial and bucolic, or must it develop and reflect more accurately the preoccupations of real Nineties countryfolk? Should we - does he - really care? He pours scorn on what he claims was Gwen Berryman's delusion that she was in fact Doris Archer but, in the next breath, expresses outrage at the fact that Ruth Patterson, a subsequent editor, dared to kill off a lovable individual he had himself introduced - Jack Woolley's elderly bull-terrier, Captain.

In a way, you can't blame him. Half the nation seems to believe they all exist. Letters, telegrams, bouquets pour in to the characters at times of crisis, and in the Seventies, a deluded graffiti artist was moved to denounce the Archer granny

on a wall in North London, with the words "Doris Archer is a Prude". Vanessa Whitburn's book, *The Archers - The Changing Face of Radio's Longest Running Drama* has a firmer grip on reality. She covers much of the same ground, though more sketchily, and includes pages of photographs and brief biographies of the actors as themselves, as well as in character.

This is a book for fans, glossy and accessible. Whitburn, prime target of Smethurst's scorn, is generous to him, praising him for the splendid social comedy he brought into the series, but she is also certain that stories need to be continually updated and new elements introduced. She aims to provide a rich mix of agriculture, humour and strong emotional complexity, and a good many listeners think she is doing pretty well. True, there are a lot of powerful women in Ambridge these days, but then we are all entitled to our dreams. Besides, some of us remember the late-lamented Aunt Laura, and they've never come tougher than her.

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Stand back Karan, Lauren and Klein

Tommy Hilfiger's fashion appeals to both preppy New Yorkers and black urban rappers. Prince Charles and Snoop Doggy Dogg have Tommy in common. Today his collection arrives at the Royal Albert Hall By Edward Helmore



The world of the American fashion designer Tommy Hilfiger will be unveiled in a catwalk show at the Royal Albert Hall in London today but it will matter little if the audience likes it or not - Tommy Hilfiger's push for our hearts and minds will not be fought on the pages of *Vogue* but on the pavements and in the clubs.

If Hilfiger's lifestyle conquest of Europe goes according to plan, as it probably will given the mechanical precision of his US operation, we will soon be living in a red, white and blue Tommyverse, working in and working out in Tommy wear, snoozing in Tommy sleepwear and smelling of apple pie care of Tommy: the New American Fragrance.

Forty-four-year-old Hilfiger is the current success story of American fashion. Since 1992 the company has grown into Wall Street's favourite frock stock and last year it turned over \$480m, buffeting the established heavyweights of Donna Karan, Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein.

But unlike his competitors, what Hilfiger offers is not so much the clever re-modelling of European fashion in the name of ease and lifestyle, but a brand of hip, affordable "urban prep" derived from the melting pot of American life.

Whether we are ready for Tommy Hilfiger's brand of "classics with a twist" depends on how far we are willing to be seduced by the heavily branded style of casualwear and its attendant images of wholesome fun and promises of popularity. The name already signifies the height of cool among black club kids and though Hilfiger's genuine brand clothes are not yet available, counterfeit merchandise is in high demand.

In an inconspicuous building in midtown Manhattan, Tommy Hilfiger employees move purposely from room to room as his assistant - one of eight - greets visitors profusely. "We're very excited, to be honest, very excited," she says, bearing gifts of the new Tommy fragrance and a 10 Years of Tommy promotional video.

Soon enough Tommy himself glides over, projecting the kind of friendly ease that is simultaneously winning and alarming. Slightly built, he is as fresh-faced and clean-cut as an all-American boy could be. From his page-boy hair-cut and whiter-than-white caps of his tombstone teeth, his open white shirt and blue chinos to his shiny black penny loafers, he is put together in precisely the look that has taken America by storm.

Not surprisingly, his spacious office is spotless and filled with the paraphernalia of a boys-own dream - NFL football helmets, antique military regalia. Behind his desk hang huge photographs of Mick Jagger and John Lennon; on one wall is a set of splashy paintings by David Bowie; signed guitars from Ron Wood and Steve Winwood take pride of place alongside one another. Tommy sits behind an imposing oak desk, swivelling in his raised chair and looking down upon visitors who sink helplessly into the huge chairs opposite. He looks like a cross between Captain Scarlet and the Cheshire Cat.

What makes Tommy tick is not easy to tell by meeting the man. Tommy's tick, such as it is, is an enveloping all-American corporate ethos, expressed in the third person, channelled with an unbreaking gaze and illustrated with hand gestures.

"Tommy is classic but updated, modern, athletic, functional, accessible. It is bright, fun and full of life and spirit," he says. He could be talking about himself. "We develop themes around our groups - snowboarding, surfing, along with sailing gear, baseball. And we also contribute to my fondness of English sports. We do a cricket group."

Cricket? In America?

"Well, it's really tennis-golf but we call it cricket because maybe we use more cricket-type colours."

It's soon clear that whatever line one takes - gentle banter, direct questions - the result is the same. Tommy is a walking, talking press release. His delivery is classic image projection that makes the head spin and the heart sink. Project the image, points one, two, three. Project the image, project the...

"We believe we have a world class product... we've done it in a different way... it's incredibly high quality and great style but American style that translates into global style at affordable price points... accessible to the world."

Ho-hum.

Tommy's professionalism even runs to memorising a "face book", a kind of corporate *Who's Who*, so that he can greet every employee in each of his 340 outlets by name on his frequent in-store promotional tours through the malls of America.

Wherever he goes he is treated like one of his rockstar heroes and is shadowed by a private security detail. He obvi-

ously enjoys the attention and knows the value of keeping in touch with his customers; an aide always trails him with signed photographs for Tommy to give to his fans.

There is little to suggest that there is much to uncover about Tommy, what you see is what you get. "There's just nothing incredibly mysterious," he says somewhat apologetically. "In fact, I'm more normal than people would like. They might like something more juicy or interesting with my background or my life. But I am who I am."

To many he is a relentless self-promoter who provides a corporate face for his corporate name - which, in a Faustian but not uncommon pact in the fashion business, is owned by his backer, the Hong Kong-based textile magnate, Silas Chou. In exchange, Hilfiger owns 22.5 per cent of the company (valued at \$100m) and enjoys an annual salary of \$6m. For that he must maintain appearances and avoid controversy.

He gives to charity, he uses his Gulfstream II jet for business only, he likes fishing, cycling, skiing, wide open spaces, his house on Mustique. He lives with his wife of 16 years, Susie, and their four children in a 22-room colonial farmhouse in Greenwich, Connecticut, decorated by Colefax & Fowler.

In fact, all one can know about Tommy is already on the promotional video that cuts between film of Tommy aged four and Tommy now, discussing what it was like then.

We learn that he grew up in Elmira, a small town in upstate New York, as one of nine children. That in 1969 he started his first business, a chain of upstate New York hippie boutiques called People's Place, with just \$150 and 20 pairs of denim bell-bottoms. Having opened 10 stores by 1977, the company hit hard times and Hilfiger was bankrupted.

He then switched from retailer to freelance designer before forming a partnership with Mohan Murjan, an Indian investor, and launching his first cheeky assault on the orthodoxy of American fashion by pitching himself as a younger Ralph Lauren. Before bailing out of that deal in 1988, he opened an unremarkable and short-lived shop on South Molton Street.

Sartorially at least, Tommy Hilfiger has something for everyone. He counts among his custom the presidential celebrity of Bill Clinton (who wears his ties), Snoop Doggy

Dogg (who favours the extra-large streetwear), Prince Charles (whose framed letter of appreciation for a delivery of freebies is in Tommy's office), Fergie (who likes to fly in his jet), singer Björk and rockers Metallica.

Though no one knows why Tommy's bold logos have become totems of black urban cool, he's now cashing in on an invaluable cultural cachet for all it's worth and has enlisted producer Quincy Jones's daughter and rap impresario Russell Simmons to help keep rappers coming his way.

Rapper Q-Tip even included him in a song, "Tommy Hil was my nigga/ and others couldn't figure/ how me an Hilfigga/ used to move through with vigga." High praise for a suburban white boy who presents himself as a regular guy designing for other regular guys and soon, girls.

As the self-described antithesis to the Parisian catwalk designers, he does not seek the mercurial "moments" so beloved by the fashion pack and, as a result, has suffered bouts of the silent treatment that is their preferred signal of disapproval.

Last year, in what was perceived as a tacit rebuke, the Council of Fashion Designers of America refused to give any award in the men's category at their annual awards ceremony. Though he was awarded Menswear Designer of the Year in January this year, he remains a subversive to the industry - no heroin chic, no jumping on fads, just consistent development of signature lines.

"There is the trendy fashion business that has to do with people being in business one minute and out the next and I'm not in that race to see who can be funkier or more eccentrically creative," he says. "I choose to think we are running an apparel business run on a combination of product, marketing, placement, strategy and profitability."

Despite the sniffy - probably jealous - reaction of fashion's elite, Hilfiger understands the business as one of margins and volume, and gives his customers what they want, not what he thinks they should want.

Perhaps this is a failure of imagination, but as other more modish fashion sales have slipped his have risen. So when the crowds pour out of the show today they may, against their better judgment, have seen the future. Tommy's radar is, as he says, "in tune". When his first store opens in Harvey Nichols early next year the customer will be able to decide.

Lunch for £5, Dinner for £10

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Filter coffee

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Profiteroles filled with Vanilla Ice
Cream, Buttercream Sauce

Filter coffee

12.5% Service Charge included



They still make them like they used to

Penny Jackson finds a house with the best of both worlds

It is easy to miss Stephen and Alison Briegel's home. Friends slow down in their cars, then drive on, still searching for a distinctively new building among the older houses in the leafy Surrey road. Their eye is more likely to be caught by the roughly drawn name stuck in the window than by the fresh lines of a house just months old.

Not all owners of a new home would wish it to be so unassuming. But to the Briegels it represents a triumph. They have built themselves their ideal house - one with an interior layout of their choice with an appearance that suggest age but is not mock period. A year before they would never even have dreamt of living in a new house. Until then they were part of that vast section of the population who always saw themselves living in a period house.

"We were intending to buy one and do it up," said Stephen Briegel. "But after having given up with London because of prices and searched without success in Surrey we decided to look for land." As a partner in Allen Briegel, a company specialising in new homes, land and development, it would seem an obvious step. The fact that they had not considered this option before was a measure, they say, of their attachment to old houses. "For that reason we wanted to be able to build something unique and in an area with an established community. Neither of us could envisage living on a new development," he said. This left them with a hard search ahead. Building land is scarce and expensive, particularly in a prime area like Surrey. Most land is bought up by the big developers and not many individuals would be able to compete with them. But the developers had not spotted the potential of the Briegel's plot. "It was a small piece of derelict land, 30ft wide and 100ft long, and close to another house," said Stephen Briegel.

After negotiating for the land, the Briegels bought it for £83,500, down from an asking price of £110,000. They then contracted a small, local



Mr and Mrs Briegel at home

company, Alexson Developments, to build the house. They had to choose someone who could be trusted to work to a high standard in a sensitive area. The house next door, for instance, is listed. "We insisted on having the house rendered in order to age it. We also wanted a conservatory to run the full width of the house for which we needed new planning permission," said Mr Briegel. It is not just the details of cornice and skirting boards - few developers would exclude them these days - that give the house such an established feel. A Cotswold stone fireplace with deep shelving along

side gives the sitting room a cottage atmosphere. The entrance at the side of the house allows for a large room at the front and a sensible sized hallway.

In a recent survey of new home buyers, Savills concluded that the majority of new home owners wanted a period facade with the conveniences of a modern home. Buyers also expected good value for money and higher standards of workmanship than in a survey conducted in 1992. Then, only seven per cent were satisfied with their house, whereas this year that figure has risen to 31 per cent. Stephen Briegel

believes that since the property slump, the quality of work has improved enormously. "Buyers are getting value for money. In all this house, which has five bedrooms, cost us £196,000 to build, about the same as our house in London was worth. But now this one could be sold for £250,000." As it was a new house, there was no VAT to pay. So is there anything that they miss? "The high ceilings," said Stephen Briegel. "There is that feeling of space you can't always create in a new house. But we don't miss the upkeep of an old house. We have not had one problem with this house. Not even a dodgy drain."

Househunter Dormans Park, Surrey

A house built seven years ago by the present owners is for sale in Dormans Park, between East Grinstead and Lingfield in Surrey. Crispin, built in the grounds of an older property, has a guest suite on the first floor of the five-bedroom, three-bathroom house. The one-and-a-half-acre gardens and grounds are in a wooded setting. The house has the remaining balance of a ten year NHBC guarantee. Offers in the region of £425,000. Agents are Knight Frank (01892 515035).

For what it's worth: This week has seen the launch of a "buy to let" initiative by the Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA), to encourage small investors to put money into property. Since the slump in the late Eighties, first-time buyers, who often saw the value of their flats plummet, have preferred to rent before going straight for a larger home. ARLA expects to attract better-off, middle-aged investors stepping in. Halifax Mortgage Services, Homeloans Direct, Mortgage Express and Woolwich Direct will offer mortgages of up to 75 per cent and will take rental income into account. So will estate agents be encouraged to shift their least attractive properties with talk of income potential? Andrew Reeves, a national council member of ARLA, advises: "The first port of call should be letting agents, not estate agents. You must know what properties have a rental appeal."

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How to have a field day with the secrets of local historians

Old names can provide clues to the structures used by our ancestors, reports Clive Fewins

The name "Bubbles Field" mystified a group of new residents when they arrived in the village of Holbeton, South Devon. When they asked how it had gained its name, a retired farmer, John Sherrell, recalled a "creamwell" at the bottom of the field.

"It was last used before the war," says Mr Sherrell, who is 88. "The bubbles refer to the springs that used to bubble up there."

When the group walked to the bottom of the field they found a decaying cylindrical stone structure with the remnants of a wooden door buried in the undergrowth. It was built directly over a spring, which was still there.

"The building's function was to keep cream and butter cool in the days before modern refrigerators were widespread," says Ian Kemp, who led the search party.

Rediscovering the Holbeton creamwell is the sort of event that brings delight to campaigners Susan Clifford and Angela King. The two, joint co-ordinators of Common Ground, the London-based environmental charity dedicated to preserving the "local distinctiveness of our countryside", have recently turned their attention to fields.

"Field Days is a national project in which we want to persuade people to look very hard at their local fields, and a good way to start is by studying the old field names, as the people did at Holbeton," says Sue Clifford.

Bubbles Field is not an exceptionally unusual one, but it was still exciting for the Holbeton group to realise how it had gained its name by means of such a graphic example.

Field names like Cuckoo Nook, The Vinegar Bottle, Saucer Field, Drumble Hangmans field, Long Friday, Teakettle Handpiece and Wot Ground have similarly graphic titles, but it is rarely as easy as it was in Holbeton to trace their origins.

The importance of field names to Common Ground and many local historians is that they reveal the rich diversity of our landscape. While conservationists have been looking ever more closely at hedgerows, stone walls, flower meadows, ponds, trees and barns, they have often neglected to study the fields that gave rise to so many of these features, Ms Clifford points out.

"By rediscovering what their names mean we can encourage people to look after these fields," she says. "Like woods, they need using. All fields should do a job, which is why set-aside is so awful. By going back to the old name, known to locals and found in title deeds and on the maps of the Forties, we can often gain clues as to what the field was used for."

The names may also suggest future potential. For example, Blue Button Field. With a small change in management, a



Field trip: Common Ground's Julian Cross near Shaftsbury in Dorset Photograph: John Lawrence

field with such a name may once again be a flourishing source of the wild scabious that provided its name.

Likewise any name that hints at the presence of water – such as "Bubbles" – might help drought-ridden farmers to solve some of their problems.

In 1994 the Herefordshire Field Name Survey Group, which is composed of volunteers from a number of local history groups, won a British Archaeological Society Award for their research, which covered 260 parishes and more than 125,000 fields. Their finds have included a hitherto unknown moor and bailey castle in a field named "Castle Tump" in the village of Upton Bishop, near Ross-on-Wye.

A similar occurrence took place at Welton in Northamptonshire, where local enthusiasts discovered a moor and bailey previously not included in the British Historic Monuments Record.

"Tump" is one of the easier field names to interpret – it usually refers to a mound of some sort. However seemingly obvious, words can be deceptive as very often the meaning of a name has changed.

A good example might be "barrow". The word is pretty unlikely to refer to a wheelbarrow – they probably did not use them at the time these fields gained their names – but people often assume this refers to a prehistoric burial site. However the old English names for "wood" and "hill" are very similar, and have been corrupted over the years into the word "barrow", so when the word appears in an old field name it does not necessarily signify the presence of a prehistoric burial site.

"Nevertheless, when a field bears this name it is in general worth investigating," says the appropriately named John Field, author of *A History of English Field Names*.

At Sulgrave Manor in Northamptonshire there are regular seasonal activities focusing on the surrounding fields, such as demonstrations of scarecrow-making, studying the old field names, making maps of them with local schoolchildren, and celebrating Apple Day in October. There are plans to incorporate the study of local fields in the national curriculum work they carry out in conjunction with local schools.

"We plan to grow a grain crop and also flax, which we can spin and weave, and also a crop of dye plants of some sort," says the deputy director, Maureen Jeffery. "So often, modern children do not associate food with crops any more, which is a shame. After all, in Tudor times, which is the period we concentrate on, most of the children round here would have worked on the land. We shall use no artificial fertilisers and only water from the stream, so the children can also learn to appreciate the consequences of crop failure."

Sue Clifford says: "We take it lying down when the French tell us that the soil of every wine slope in Burgundy produces a different flavour. In this country, just as

much, crops taste differently from different land. Some of our fields have had four to five thousand years of work put into them. Rather than turning our backs on our fields we should take them more seriously, and encourage farmers to keep them in good heart."

As a start, Common Ground is trying to encourage local groups to act as "field marshals", who will try to alert local people to the riches present in so many old fields.

They hope that farmers and landowners can be persuaded to have the names of old fields painted or carved on their gates. Another idea is that people who have bought a building plot on what used to be a field may like to name their houses after the old field name.

"Field Days is about much more than field names," says Ms Clifford. "It is about raising everyone's awareness of the great richness of history, archaeology, buildings, artefacts, legends, folklore, names geology, soils, boundaries, plant and animal life – and the potential for wider use to be found in our fields."

A History of English Field Names, by John Field, is published by Longman at £15.99.

For literature on the Common Ground Field Days project send an A5 s.a.e. to Common Ground, Seven Dials warehouse, 44, Earlham Street, London WC2H 9LA.

A cull of the stags that are roaring away

For anyone who goes stalking in Scotland, the main aim is to contribute to the annual cull which keeps deer numbers to a tolerable level; you are shooting not only for sport, but for the good of the herd and the environment. A further benefit is that the exercise takes you into the remotest corners of the Highlands, and enables you to see lovely places which you would otherwise never visit.

So it was when we set out by boat on a brilliant morning from the hamlet of Kingairloch, on the coast of the Morvern peninsula in Argyll. Our destination was the outer fringe of the Ardornish estate, away to the south west – a long ridge of mountain, a mile or so inland, from which shot deer can be recovered only by sea.

My stalker/guide for the day was Iain Thornber, a scholarly local historian whose skill and knowledge added immensely to the pleasure of the expedition. As we forged along the coast in the *Cathula*, the tourist boat which he operates with a colleague, Robin Maclean, Iain regaled us with fact and legend.

The wooded cliffs, he told us, were pocked with level platforms, cut out by the charcoal-burners of yore. At many points there were ruins of houses abandoned many generations ago. Here, quite recently, four pigs were turned loose for the summer, and flourished mightily on natural food.

We went ashore at Eignaig (the Bay of the Oaks), where a single house nestles among woods in a tiny bay. Thence we climbed away up the footpath which is the place's only link with the interior. Robin, meanwhile, took the boat out again, to patrol off the coast and stand by to collect us.

Across the water, just off the mainland, lay Berneray Island, long and slim and dark as the back of a whale, of which Iain told a curious story. Apparently the 6th-century St Columba prophesied that if anyone cut down a great yew growing on the island, retribution would strike in the form of blood, water and fire. So it did in the 19th century, when a forebear of Iain's took the tree to make a staircase in his castle. During the felling, transport and preparation, several men were killed, and through three fires in the castle, the staircase escaped unscathed.

By the time we were on the ridge, at 1,500ft, the wind had risen violently. Robin came on the radio to say that he could not stay where he was, but was



DUFF HART-DAVIS

heading for Innimmore Bay, five miles ahead of us. This shaped our tactics and drove us on.

Over our picnic lunch Iain brought out another strange tale, modern this time, of a nearby landowner, who went off to work in the woods one morning, and was never seen alive again. In spite of extensive searches with dogs, no trace of him was discovered until five years later. Then, the day after a memorial service had been held, his skeleton was discovered, fully clothed and sitting propped against the base of a tree, not half a mile from home.

A trudge along the ridge was enlivened by the sight of 150 deer coming up out of the interior in a cavalcade – a spectacle which raised the question now vexing many Highland lairds. Which should have priority – deer and sheep, or trees?

For the past 150 years the animals have held sway, and by their relentless grazing they have contributed to the decline of the forest. Now the mood has swung in favour of trees, and people are speaking of a colossal cull, to reduce deer numbers to a level at which natural regeneration will again become possible.

At last we were in a position to spy down on to the relatively flat ground which stretched away to the top of the cliffs. Several groups of stags were in view, and we got a beast which, we had discerned through our telescopes, was past its best.

It remained only to haul the carcass to the boat. A radio call confirmed that our skipper was anchored below us. An hour later, after a murderous descent of the cliff – all rocks and holes concealed under bracken – we were safely back on board, with seals popping up all round us, and the sun going down beyond the ruin of Ardornish Castle, perched on its promontory in silhouette against a silvery haze.

So ended a day of stags roaring, golden eagles soaring, good fellowship, and history both comic and mournful, all in close proximity to the ever-changing sea.

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CROATIA: START HERE

Croatia is all about subtraction. Take away six years, and you reveal a coastline that attracted 10 million tourists in 1990. Remove the rest of Yugoslavia, and you are still left with the region where four out of five of them holidayed. And until next summer at least, Croatia is

blissfully minus the crowds. The Dalmatian coast, that stunning stretch of rocky shoreline framed between mountains and the crystal waters of the Adriatic Sea, looks much the same as it did when Yugoslavia was a country and Yugotours was the cheap and cheerful company that sent us there

by the plane. In the late 80s, Croatia was to be the new Spain for Western Europeans. Hotels were appearing or being planned on a grand scale. Then, in 1991, the tragic, bloody carve-up began.

Croatia has emerged from the sad and shabby war with considerable touristic booty.

The haul comprises seven protected National Parks, two cities classed as world heritage treasures, not to mention the 1,185 islands, islets and reefs.

The strangely jerky geography of Croatia means there is a logical slide south-east from the Istrian peninsula, where a few

thousand brave (or crafty) Brits have this summer been saving the sunbeds for the re-emergence of mass-market tourism. This event is scheduled for next May when Britain's biggest tour operator returns to Croatia. To mangle the company's slogan: if Thomson plans to do it next year - do it now.



Croatia's coast: indulge yourself.

Photograph: Katz

Marco Polo was (born) here

By Pascal Wyse and Henrietta Seeborn

The hotels that, next summer, should be packed with Thomson holiday-makers, are concentrated in Istria: a Kent-sized wedge poking out like a tomb from the throat of the Adriatic. With the flexible frontiers that are *de rigueur* in the Balkans, the peninsula of Istria has an understandably strong Italian flavour - it was part of Italy until 1947 and has managed to retain a trickle of tourists during recent years. The hilltop town of Rovinj is crowned with the impressive Cathedral of St Euphemia which looms over the tangled activity of the fishermen in the harbour below. Here, travel inertia happily sets in among fresh sardines, chips and beer, and ice-cream - a national addiction.

Somehow we retrieved the momentum, and continued around the coast to Rijeka, which is one end of the line. This particular line is Jadrolinija, a shipping company whose army of ferries remained largely neutral during the fighting, which are now back in service shuttling along the coast as far as Dubrovnik. Travelling this way gives you the most comprehensive and serene view as you weave your way through the islands - and the chance to stop off at two islands of your choice as you travel south.

Yet before we indulged ourselves, we did the proper thing and paid brief respects to the capital, Zagreb. With time not on our side, the cosmopolitan offerings of the city gave way to a search for food. The hypnotic markets are the best places to track down culinary authenticity, as many of the restaurants serve dull Euro-cuisine. A morning of miming requests in deli's is well worth it. Zagreb to Split by bus can take you through the Plitvice Lakes National Park - and the first evidence of the war. The past, present and future of the many small villages that lie along this lush mountain journey is shown by burnt-out, patched-up or brand-new buildings. Away from the tourism enclaves, which look eagerly to the future, these deserted ruins haunt the people and horrify the tourist. As the terrain

Getting there Croatian Airlines (0171-306 3105) flies daily from Heathrow to Zagreb (£275 return). It has charters from Gatwick to Split and Manchester to Dubrovnik.

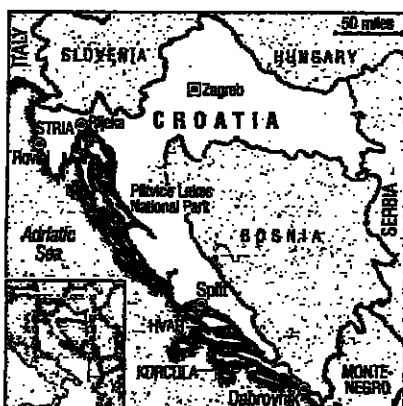
Packages Phoenix (0345 626468), Balkan (0171-543 5555) and Thomson (0990 502555) will offer packages next summer. A week in Korcula with Phoenix in May costs from £257. For a fortnight half-board in peak season in Rovinj, Thomson charges £509.

Getting around Jadrolinija ferries operate comprehensive services for the entire coastline and all the important islands. Rijeka to Dubrovnik (22 hours) costs around £16. Buses are the best way to travel inland. Local buses take a single payment of 5 kuna (4 if you buy a ticket in advance from a street kiosk) irrespective of journey length. Tickets for long-distance buses must be bought (in advance for busy routes) at the central stations.

Money There are about eight Croatian kunas to the pound. This new currency is impossible to change outside Croatia, so don't exchange more than you need. Sterling is accepted in banks and bureaux de change, but for a stash of emergency cash, take Deutschmarks - much more easily negotiable than pounds.

Finally loses all signs of habitation and inhumanity, you enter Plitvice - an entry in Unesco's World Heritage List - for an afternoon of lakes, forests and waterfalls fit for any shampoo ad. Be warned: to continue to Split, you need plenty of melodrama to get the hourly buses to stop.

The further you are from Split, the worse the city looks. Its backdrop consists of familiarly foul eastern European high-rises. They give no clue that the centre is another world heritage site, the heart of Dalmatia. But within minutes we were lost - in the remains of the Roman emperor Diocletian's retirement palace. Here, shops and cafes are filed ingeniously between the arches and pillars. But we must have looked bewildered, as two



Who to ask: Croatian National Tourist Board, 2 The Lancasters, 162 Fulham Palace Rd, London W6 9ER (0181-563 7979)

And the Foreign Office says... "Exercise caution in areas bordering Bosnia Hercegovina and Montenegro including the Prevlaka Peninsula, where some restrictions on movement may be encountered. Visitors should be aware of, and take local advice, on the presence of unexploded mines and ordnance in areas affected by war damage."

Croatian students who had read our guidebook on the bus - with some amusement - spotted us once more. They were on their way to check out a bit of progress, the newly opened Café Vlidivica, looking down on the city from Marjan Hill. Surveying the view of their country, they made it clear how much Croatia needs - and deserves - tourism. "Before the war, the English went to France, the French ran away to Italy, so the Italians came here along with the Germans," they neatly summed up. "Anyway, we're off to the Shakespeare Bar, if you want to come."

We split from Split on a newly decorated ship that must have seen service for much of Marshal Tito's reign (faded pictures of the Croatian leader of Yugoslavia can still

be glimpsed through the occasional window), and were steered gingerly through the tricky inshore waters.

The island of Hvar presents a bustling exterior - like Split, an attack on the senses, but a more sensual one. The sight of two grubby rucksacks (and owners) created a row amongst the group of locals gathered at the harbour to offer their spare rooms for spare cash. And this is the hospitality to seek, often offering welcoming, inexpensive accommodation.

This Croatian "Madeira" holds a record for its quota of sunshine, enjoyed by visitors and vineyards alike. Amass a picnic of sheep's cheese and cured meats and climb up to the Venetian fortress built to protect Hvar from Turkish invasion in the 16th century, and you spice the feast with a full panorama of the town below.

There are few better places to enjoy the soft September sun than while drifting through a seascape in the general direction of Greece. Still three hours' sail from Dubrovnik, the island of Korcula tempts you back to land with what appears to be an appetiser for the city ahead - a Dubrovnik in miniature. Here you are in esteemed travel company as you enter the birthplace of Marco Polo. Despite being ruled at various times by Venetians, Croats, Hungarians, Bosnian king Tvrtko, Austrians, French and Russians, and even briefly occupied by the British, Korcula carries a firm national stamp. Korcula is famous for its stonemasons, shipbuilders, sea merchants, sculptors and artists. However you plan your tour of the old walled town, the herringbone pattern of streets quickly hooks you in, revealing by turns the products of these crafts.

In the course of 10 days, you can see a bewildering Balkan repertoire of culture and countryside, mood and majesty, blessed with a generous scattering of heritage. You might easily go home happy right now - were not Dubrovnik, the greatest Adriatic city of all, so seductively close.

Dubrovnik: a lesson in ancient splendour

George Bernard Shaw was never an employee of the Croatian tourist board. But his slogan still works for them: "Those who seek paradise on Earth should come to Dubrovnik". There's an easy way to investigate this thesis: just pitch up at the main gate to the old town - Pile Gate - and prepare for a lesson in ancient splendour.

As you pass over the drawbridge, you are scrutinised from above by the city's patron, Saint Blaise, who cradles a miniature of the whole town in his left hand. To appreciate properly the barely scarred mosaic of Dubrovnik, invest a few kunas (about 70p) for a ticket to roam around the two kilometres of surrounding fortifications. From here you can map out the monasteries, churches and terracotta-roofed dwellings that crowd this platform of Adriatic light and stone. Fig trees and lunchtime smells which reach up from the gardens and open kitchen windows below, prove the buildings' inner hubbub - these are not just museum pieces.

Dubrovnik is a place to meander - there are 1,000 years to consider here. Rush through the Franciscan monastery and you may just overlook one of the oldest working pharmacies in Europe. Turn any corner too quickly and you are bound to miss the gaze of a statue from above or the concealed entrance to another monumental maze.

If your paradise is a more solitary one, stony beaches are a stone's throw away. Push the boat out further and you can have the island of Lokrum practically to yourself. To disappear from sight altogether, put on a snorkel and test Jacques Cousteau's assertion that Dubrovnik enjoys the cleanest sea in the Mediterranean. That tourist board enlists all the big names.

The morning market offers an abundance of fresh

herbs, local brews, succulent fruit and cheese in oil - a speciality of the region; or for more immediate refreshment and relief from the mid-day sun, seek refuge in one of the many stylish cafes that line the pedestrian backbone to the town.

The only traffic in this carless zone is that of the evening strollers, who pour into the streets, promenading and pointing to try to match the town's beauty. While the kids found heritage corners to knock a ball against and the steps to St Blaise's cathedral played host to an impromptu singalong, we tracked down the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra rounding off the Summer Festival with a concert in the Rector's Palace.

Up the steep hill that leads away from the main gate, what appears to be a small balcony bar miraculously seats four hundred. This open-air cinema, whose ocean views are as distracting as the movies it plays, shows Dubrovnik's gift for disguising its more modern distractions. Underground, inside Club Arsenal down the road, an explosive mix of Croatian soldiers and teenage girls fail to ruffle the cravats of the Atlas Club Nantika above.

No wonder half the world has tried to get their hands on Dubrovnik. It has been captured by the Byzantine Empire, by Arabs and Normans, by Venice, by Napoleon, and by Austria-Hungary - and has remained indestructible. Posted outside the various entrances to the Old Town are maps detailing the damage sustained during the siege of 1991. Over 2,000 shells fell on the city and as the map shows in black, every street was damaged in some way. It is only the occasional pock mark on the pavement or a newly patched roof that confirms this information. There is no paradise lost here.

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Edmund Bealby-Wright visits Nottingham for the Goose Fair



Next weekend the normally placid Forest Recreation Ground will spontaneously ignite into electric fire. For three days this park beside the A60 will burn with thousands of whirling light bulbs, screaming adolescents and growling generators. This is the largest fair in Europe.

The name "Goose Fair" hails from the days when families bought the bird for Christmas dinner on the first weekend of October. Now, amid the sonic dash of hundreds of public address systems each blaring a different pop tune, the smell of warm plastic sold as hot dogs, the bouffant beehives of pink candyfloss, the searick goldfish in plastic bags and the overflowing litterbins, no one misses the absent geese.

My own undying love for fairs has been purely voyeuristic ever since I was sick round the back of a luxury trailer home after a particularly gruelling ride on a waltzing teacup. A ferocious Alsatian on a chain chased me off and began to devour the proceeds. I realised he was having more fun than I was. But I can see that some people want to be turned upside down and inside out. "Tout à son goût," applies to humans as well as Alsatis.

It would be advisable to settle your stomach before exploring Nottingham itself, because the city's dizzying number of attractions include man-made caves under a shopping centre, a humorous look at imprisonment in the old County Gaol and a whole variety of sights with tenuous connections to Robin Hood. You can relive "The Tales of Robin Hood" in

Maid Marian Way, try to imagine the Merry Men storming the castle (not easy – it was demolished in 1651) or visit Sherwood Forest. Further afield is "The World of Robin Hood" near Retford, and the latest attraction, which they call "Robin Hood in Fairyland".

If two-minute rides at the fairground are not nauseating enough, luxury minibuses will whiz you up and down the city's many hills on a roller-coaster ride lasting half an hour. But most people prefer to get to know the Queen of the Midlands, as she is known, on foot. I don't know if Nottingham gained its feminine gender from its undulating terrain, or from the fact that the town's most famous industry (apart from selling Robin Hood souvenirs) is lace manufacture. Whatever the reason, describing the city's character is like describing the ideal mistress. Not only is she curvaceous, she is sophisticated, expensive, and half French.

Her dual nationality dates back to the Normans, who built the first castle. For centuries a French borough and an English borough stood side by side, and there was once a wall across the market-place reputedly to prevent the two communities from fighting. This dual nationality persists in spirit; the French borough is dedicated to shopping and entertainment; the English borough is the commercial and professional district. Nottingham's shops and theatres draw people from far and wide, leaving the English borough relatively quiet, despite the fact that it is the most interesting part of the city.

Exploring along High Pavement, you come to an area called the Lace Market. It is not a market in the usual sense, but a jumble of narrow streets dedicated to making and selling lace. You know you have got there when you find the medieval church of St Mary, surrounded on three sides by Victorian warehouses which tower over it like bodyguards protecting Dustin Hoffman. Squashed down like a jack-in-a-box ready to spring, it is a very fine and venerable old church, but the warehouses are more immediately impressive. Five or six storeys high, swankily dressed in red brick with white stone detailing, they have something Italian about them. These palazzi are a product of the astonishing lace boom of the 1850s from which the area hasn't quite recovered. Lace-making continues in Nottingham; having covered late Victorians with mourning veils, antimacassars and cake dollies, the industry now persists on a much reduced scale. The inevitable museum telling the "story of lace" gives an insight – but you get a more powerful impression of how important it once was by walking around these streets.

The most impressive of all is Caged Broadway. The whole street was designed by one man, a local architect, T.C. Hine, who cut this undulating canyon through the enormous warehouses so that they seem to have miraculously parted to make way for the approaching customer. Anyone who walks between these two billowing curtains of brick will arrive in a euphoric state, ready to purchase yards of expensive material. The high walls are

beautifully articulated with stone-dressed corners and cornices. Imagine two great classical churches playing boomp-a-daisy, with their apses practically touching, and you have some idea how it feels to step into this world. Grand doorways entice the customer into the various lace-makers' studios, where large windows illuminate the samples for inspection. If you penetrate the maze of courtyards you will find chimneys that sprout as confidently as a Borromini spire. Many industrial buildings are dramatic – these ones are operatic. I saw a group of secretaries going off to get their sandwiches and I swear they swayed their hips like the chorus in *Carmen*.

Down the road, the same architect designed the palatial Adams Building for another of the lace barons, constructing a heart-swelling facade shaped like an opened-out corset. With a thrusting central apron flanked by curved wings, and an imposing flight of steps rising to the wildly decorative entrance hall, this shapely building enticed Victorian womanhood to enter, only to find themselves trapped into buying more of their famously superfluous undergarments. It is still probably the grandest place in the world to buy lingerie.

Spend an afternoon in the lace district and I promise you won't be tempted any more by the sight of men's thighs in shades of Lincoln green.

Nottingham Goose Fair runs from 3 to 5 October, 11am to midnight. For Nottinghamshire tourist information, call 0115-977 3558.

Racing certainties for a new Prince Bishop

Party piece: Sedgefield. As Labour activists meet in Blackpool, Teresa Allan visits their leader's lair

Tony Blair's constituency? No one seemed to know where to find Sedgefield. Eventually my turf-loving father revealed the whereabouts of the Islington inhabitant's seat: "Sedgefield is just north of Darlington and it's got a racecourse. Not a very good one."

It is apt that the Labour leader should represent a constituency in County Durham, which is the land of the Prince Bishops. They obviously like religious leaders around here. In the Middle Ages, the Prince Bishops ran Northumbria with a rod of iron, with little regard to the monarch of the day.

Tony Blair's Sedgefield constituency is in sharp relief to those of the two other party leaders. Unlike Huntingdon and Yeovil, which have bland, pedestrianised town centres, Sedgefield is a serious village (although it prefers to describe itself as a small market town) with a village green and five surrounding pubs. This rural idyll amid industrial decline is dominated by St Edmund's Church, which has magnificent 17th-century wood carvings.

A half-mile walk up the path from behind the Hardwick Arms Pub takes you to Hardwick Country Park, designed by the landscape gardener James Paine in the 18th century. Paine's tasteful mix of Gothic follies, man-made lakes and carefully planted woodlands is refreshing, particularly as countryside in this part of limestone County Durham is otherwise uneventful. The helpful park ranger (Mr Gibson, on my day) will be happy to tell you about the restoration of the serpentine bridge, if he is not already dealing with the daily invasion by "four or five coachloads" of schoolchildren.

I fled to the tranquillity of Sedgefield Pottery, in Cross Street, where Bill Todd, a local potter, mixes wood ash with glaze to produce distinctive, dark grey china, ornamented with swirling designs which seem Middle-Eastern as much as Celtic in influence. The pottery, formerly the village smithy, has been retained and restored with due respect to the blacksmith. On the hoof, I discovered that bus services

from the Green outside St Edmund's Church are surprisingly frequent. A £4.75 Explorer day pass took me, in thunder and lightning, to Bishop Auckland, the traditional seat of the Bishop of Durham, where amongst other attractions there is a deer park.

Travelling in the other direction to Hartlepool, the neighbouring parliamentary seat of Peter Mandelson MP (widely regarded as the power behind what may become Tony Blair's princely throne) I realised that, should Labour gain power, Mr Blair need have no fears about quelling local trade unions. His constituency office is based not in Sedgefield but nearby at so-called Thindon Colliery. The young village of Thindon, unlike Sedgefield, is almost aggressively new and sprawling, with not a miner in sight. There are no longer any working pits in Durham, so there won't be any local trouble for Mr Blair from the NUM.

Mr Blair's constituency is scarred by disused railway lines, which cut swathes into the landscape, and are now mostly used as long-distance paths. So there also won't be any trouble from the NUR. Incidentally, trains no longer run between Stockton and Darlington. One hesitates to speculate as to whether this is because the first ever victim of a railway accident in Britain was on this line in 1830 (he was a MP). But there is an excellent railway museum at Darlington.

I didn't bother with the racecourse, on the basis that our three main political parties have been arguing the merits of first-past-the-post for far too long. But I did notice that the local authority's motif on its vehicles is a stag. Bambi?



SIMON CALDER

'Air Passenger Duty is a poll tax with wings'

Travellers are easy targets, especially for governments keen to raise some extra cash. The Chancellor's tax on travel, Air Passenger Duty (APD), has been with us for two years – during which it has cost British travellers and foreign visitors £600m, all gathered by airlines and agents who have been obliged to become unpaid tax collectors.

APD is a poll tax with wings: the £5 charge that applies on domestic and European flights adds 17 per cent to the cost of a short hop between London to Scotland, but less than 0.7 per cent to a business-class return fare to Athens.

Yet the travelling public has paid the price with barely a whimper. This has two worrying implications. The first is that Kenneth Clarke will see passengers as an easy source of additional revenue in his November budget. The second is that other governments will realise what

a rich seam of cash can be mined from tourists.

Some British holiday-makers would be forgiven for thinking that the Dominican Republic is at the front of the queue. The country has just imposed an "admission fee" of £10. From November, sun-seeking Brits should apply six weeks in advance for a tourist card for this part of the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. This, at least, is what Britain's biggest travel agency, Lunn Poly, is telling its customers in letters sent out this week.

Everyone who has booked a winter holiday in the Dominican Republic is asked to embark on a bureaucratic process that is almost Soviet in its complexity. First you have to write to the right Dominican consulate – the ones in London or Liverpool, not those in Birmingham or Grimsby – requesting an application form

(one per passenger) and sending an s.a.c. Six weeks before you wish to travel, you send the completed form with a fee of £10 a head. After that you'll need a holiday – probably somewhere involving fewer hurdles. So is the country joining the trend for ripping off tourists?

"No", say Dominican diplomats in Britain. The fault, they say, lies with the European Union. In April, the EU Common Visa List came into effect. Suddenly, citizens of the Dominican Republic needed to obtain visas to visit Britain. So by way of retribution, and by order of Presidential decree, from 1 November British passport holders will need a tourist card.

If you are one of the thousands who have been urged to apply in advance, then note that you can get in a lot cheaper on the door – and avoid all the paperwork. Tourist cards can easily be obtained upon

arrival in the Dominican Republic for \$10 (£6.50). Any sensible visitor will, therefore, avoid the tangle of red tape, and save cash.

So why should travellers be told to apply in advance? "The authorities prefer the cards to be obtained in advance of travel, as otherwise delays are likely to occur when passing through customs," says Lunn Poly. So British travellers are being asked to pay out to compensate for understaffing at foreign airports. As the Dominican vice-consul in Liverpool told me, "After a long flight, if you want to queue for ever, then by all means do".

And if you are one of the people booked on a cruise which begins and ends in the Dominican Republic, it is possible that you may have to pay the fee twice – though no one I spoke to was able to tell me for sure.

The most inventive excuse for refusing to bungee-jump over Victoria Falls – that was the tie-break for our Overland through Africa competition, staged in association with STA Travel and Kumuka. Catherine Butt of Dorset responded in verse:

"It all sounds remarkably easy. Leaping over the mighty Zambesi. But the thought of those Falls. Quite frankly appals. And would make me feel terribly queasy."

Meanwhile Stephen Gilmore (aged 22) of Leeds was frank: "The adrenaline rush is said to be better than sex and, well, I'll have to wait until I have something to compare it to."

Catherine and Stephen each win a flight from London to Harare from STA, plus a 14-day Kumuka overland tour exploring Zimbabwe and Botswana.



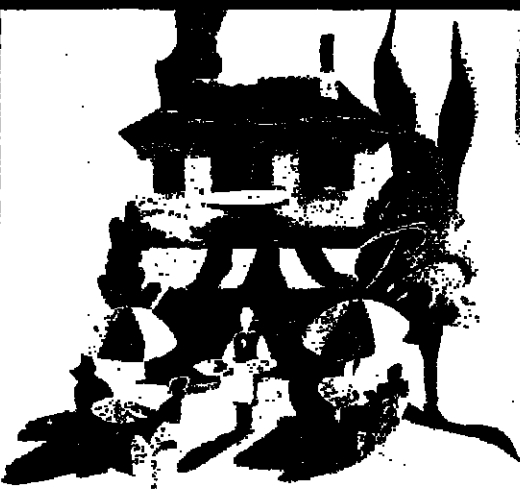
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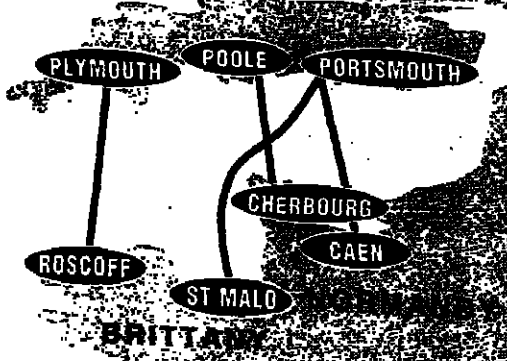
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INDIA:
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As temperatures in India fall, so too do air fares there. November marks the start of the ideal season for visitors, and coincides with some excellent air fares, writes **Omega Douglas**. We called a range of discount agents to ask for their lowest return fares for a trip of two weeks in November. All prices listed below are for connecting flights; direct services on Air India are available for £480 through its "General Sales Agent" Welcome Travel (0171-439 3627) to Delhi, Calcutta, Madras and Mumbai.

Delhi: the lowest fare we could find was £340 on Aeroflot (0171-355 2233) from London via Moscow. For only £18 more, though, you can fly on Lufthansa via Frankfurt from London, Birmingham or Manchester through Trailfinders (0171-938 3366).

Mumbai (formerly Bombay): The Lufthansa deal costs the same to here: £358 through Trailfinders. You can fly into one city and back from the other if you wish.

Calcutta: Bridge the World (0171-911 0900) has a fare of £386 on Qatar Airways, travelling via the Gulf.

Madras: Bridge the World quotes £434 from London on Gulf Air. From Manchester, Quest Worldwide (0181-547 3322) has a fare of £389 on Air India.

There are plenty of cheap charter options, too; I have just bought a fortnight's holiday from Manos Travel (0171-216 8070) for £450 on a bed and breakfast basis.

Red tape: British passport holders need a visa to visit India. If you call the 24-hour visa information service (0891 880800), you will spend a lot of time and money finding out the following:

For a three-month tourist visa, apply in person or by post to either of the following: High Commission of India, India House, Aldwych, London WC2B 4NA; or the Consulate-General of India, The Spencers, 19 Augustus Street, Jewellery Quarter, Hockley, Birmingham B18 6DS. If applying by post, first send an s.a.e. for a visa application form to the Postal Visa Section at either of the above addresses.

Once completed, send the form with three passport photos, your passport, and the fee of £13. Note that you must complete all travel within India within three months of the date of issue of the visa. "You are advised not to finalise your travel arrangements until your visa has been issued," says the High Commission. For longer periods, fees increase rapidly. A visa that allows entry at any time within three months from the date of issue, and a stay of three months, costs £26.

Health: all sorts of risks unknown in the UK exist in India, so medical consultation is essential for visitors to India. As well as the usual suspects of food and waterborne disease, the Medical Advisory Service for Travellers Abroad (0891 224100) says there is currently an epidemic of dengue fever in Delhi.

Further information: Government of India Tourist Office, 7 Cork Street, London W1X 2LN (0171-437 3677).

Seaside
retreat of
the RajChris Caldicott drifts into
Gopalpur-on-Sea

A traditional English summer holiday resort somewhere on the shores of the Bay of Bengal in India's eastern state of Orissa — a fashionable seaside retreat of the Raj? The idea was seductive. The only reference I could find to the place was in Geoffrey Moorhouse's book *Calcutta*. Moorhouse paid the town a visit during 1970. He talks of the once-booming industry of guesthouses run by Anglo-Indian landladies, and of the subsequent reversion to a sleepy fishing village. He hints, though, that enough relics of Gopalpur-on-Sea's glorious past remain to give it an endearing sense of faded splendour.

The nearest railroad to Gopalpur is 20km inland at Berampur, a town half-way between Calcutta and Madras and of so little significance that express trains do not stop there.

The road slipping down from Berampur to the coast ends with a sign announcing "Gopalpur-on-Sea 0 Kilometres", down by the sea wall. Buses terminate outside the police station where another sign invites alighting citizenry to "BE FRIENDLY WITH THE POLICE". Alongside the sea wall is a collection of stalls selling seashell necklaces, tea and cigarettes, and a beach café called the "Naaz", playing Bombay film music and offering spicy seaside snacks.

A tall, red-and-white-striped lighthouse is the newest building, close to the ruined shell of the old British Customs House facing out to sea. As well as a holiday resort, Gopalpur-on-Sea was a port where trade between India and Burma led to a harbour construction to

cope with the imports of teak, gold and rice. In exchange, spices, silver and labourers made their way back across the Bay of Bengal. During the Japanese invasion of Burma in the Forties Allied troops were stationed here in readiness for retaliatory action.

With the end of the war and Burma's self-imposed, post-independence isolation the harbour became neglected, and successive storms have completely demolished it. Neglect and storm damage have taken their toll on the abodes of the Anglo-Indian landladies, too, though some still stand, with names such as "Sea View" and "Bellevue".

All that is left of the once elegant grandeur of the Holiday Inn is the forlorn dining room. It stands alone, with orange mould growing up the walls, in memory of the servant-attended cocktail bar, shaded verandas, tennis courts and manicured lawns that once were. The roof occasionally surrenders substantial portions of itself to gravity. A man whom a plaque on the wall announces as "BB Singh (Ex Navy)" now rents out the property to short-term visitors.

For an hour every afternoon the public are permitted, on payment of one rupee (2p), to climb the spiral staircase to the summit of the lighthouse. The rewards are a welcome cool breeze and a superb view, which it is forbidden to photograph — or so I was emphatically informed by the man entrusted to forbid it. His

claim that this was in case the photographs should fall into enemy hands seemed rather sensationalist. To change the subject, I suggested that to be up on his lighthouse during the monsoon storms must be a dramatic experience. He assured me — rolling his eyes, excited at the memory of it — that there was indeed "a terrible breeze".

From the lighthouse, Gopalpur-on-Sea can be seen in its entirety. Groups of cottages either side of the main street and along the beach



make up most of the village. Beyond this is a lush interior of palm trees meeting the sandy shores of the Bay of Bengal as far as the eye can see.

Each group of cottages is served by an iron hand-pump, providing fresh water and a social gathering-place. Fishing is evidently the main industry of Gopalpur: scores of triangular-sailed boats are dotted along the coast each day. As if to match the shape of their sails, the fishermen all sport conical pointed hats, rather like dunce's caps. One of these unusually attired, dark-skinned, muscular men encountered by Moorhouse introduced himself as "nancy boy number five". I found him still there, now selling dried sea-horses and sting-ray tails as souvenirs to the new tourists. Holidaying Bengali business men, Tamil tourists, middle-class Orissians and turbaned Punjabis are joined by day-trippers

from Berampur to stroll along the beach at sunset. They paddle fully clothed, take snaps of each other and consume vast quantities of tea, ice-cream and tiffin. Sunday afternoon is by far the busiest time, when the seaside car park fills with Hero bicycles, Bajaj scooters, flimsy Rajdoot, mighty Royal Enfield motor-bikes, Ambassador cars, and Tata coaches. The scene may have its roots in places like Clacton and Southend-on-Sea, but it is now utterly Indian.

By nightfall the main street is empty of traffic and becomes an open-air cinema. The main place for any other type of night life is the Jagdish Coffee Hotel — not a hotel at all, but a one-room café open to the street. The kitchen at the back receives a constant supply of wood, water, vegetables and milk and turns it into a variety of the finest Indian cuisine.

There is a real hotel, on the edge of Gopalpur-on-Sea, surrounded by a high fence. It's an unattractive building, used almost exclusively by tour groups from the former Soviet Union. The white-skinned, overweight Russians give trinkets through the fence to the dark, skinny children of the fishermen. Under a street lamp near the entrance to this hotel, a sinister pimp — ironically afflicted with elephantiasis of the scrotum — attempts to run a sort of red-light district. He tries with unabated enthusiasm to entice passers-by to indulge in the charms of two or three unenthusiastic-looking women for 20 rupees. Whatever Gopalpur-on-Sea may have been like during the Raj, it is certainly no longer a place for elegant night life.

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Kutch: what your remember is the colour

By Clare Gervat

I remember Bhuj as though I was there yesterday, although it was many months ago in the "cool" part of the year from November to February. After the rampant tourism of Rajasthan, it was a relief to find myself in a beautiful old city with two palaces – and not a single tour bus or coach party.

It is perhaps not surprising at first that so few tourists make it to this city in Kutch, the most northern part of Gujarat, near the border with Pakistan. The arid, barren landscape around it, part of the Thar desert, seems to discourage them. But the isolation of the area means that local life has changed the much less here than in other parts of the country; the peoples of the various tribal groups that live in the villages around Bhuj still wear distinctive heavily embroidered clothes and silver jewellery. So despite the bleakness of the landscape, what you remember most is colour.

Bhuj itself, the base for exploring the tribal villages, is a maze of narrow streets, just wide enough for rickshaws, lined with shops or with heavily decorated wooden doors. Shroff Bazaar, which runs from the palace gate to the east of the old town, is the main shopping street. There's everything here from shops selling local handicrafts (copper bells and block prints among them) to a tea shop with lilac walls and turquoise benches and tables. You can browse for hours without anyone bothering you; as a result, everyone I met there had bought far more there than anywhere else – including such unlikely souvenirs as decorated chapati rollers and lurid plaques of Ganesh, the elephant god.

All visitors to Bhuj go at least once during their stay to the 18th-century Aina Mahal (Old Palace) whose lavish interior – tiled, mirrored, hung with the finest local embroideries and lit with fine glass lanterns – is a happy mishmash of decorative ideas from places as far away as Europe. The same cannot be said of the 19th-century Prag Mahal (New Palace), which looks like surplus stock from the railway age, a red-brick Italianate-Gothic monstrosity built on the same principle as a wedding cake. The only thing that can be said in its favour is that from the top of the clock tower you can see the whole of Bhuj apart from the building you're in.

The tourist office is in the Aina Mahal, and is essentially one extremely knowledgeable and helpful man with a desk and a lot of maps, who knows which tribes live in which villages, which are receptive to visitors and which not ("one of the Rabari tribes can be extremely hostile," he warned), and who can suggest itineraries and arrange a car. When I went back to see him to confirm the arrangements, he was holding a reception for the start of a three-day craft fair at the museum. I was fed tea, and biscuits from a plate with "The Queen's Jubilee", inscribed on it. Only when I took another biscuit did it become clear which Queen; there was the date – 1887.

Some villages are close enough to Bhuj to be accessible by public transport, so you don't need to hire a car. Bhujodi, for instance, is only five miles to the east, then 10 minutes walk along a dusty track off the main road. It is home to one group of Rabaris, once nomadic animal herders but now largely settled, who earn a living making cloth. There is a weaving cooperative where the men make camel wool shawls and blankets, and in nearly every house there is



a loom set into a pit in the floor, where the women do their work.

The men wear baggy white trousers tight to the ankle and a sort of white smock with a blanket over one shoulder, which is distinctive if not colourful. The women dress beautifully in bright or black embroidered black blouses, black wool skirts and huge black and red headcloths, often embroidered, that fall almost to the floor.

There were three young Rabari women chatting outside one of the small thatched huts whose picture I longed to take, but they shook their heads frantically, waving their hands in front of their faces or at my camera. I was disappointed but resigned. "Please," said the village elder who was showing me round. "They are asking if you can come back in 15 minutes. They want to put on their best clothes and jewellery."

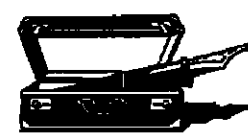
To go to the villages north of Bhuj you need not only a car but also permits, since

the area close to the border with Pakistan is considered "sensitive". This is time-consuming but not difficult, though the villages furthest north are completely out of bounds, a shame since this is where most of the Jat, also semi-nomadic animal herders, have their settlements.

Ludra, a 35-mile drive away, was the furthest north anyone was allowed to go. It was a spotlessly clean Harijan village of round huts with conical straw roofs or square houses with verandahs, their outside walls covered in painted motifs in ochre, lilac, pale blue and white. The interiors were decorated, too, with mud pinched into simple geometric designs, whitewashed and inlaid with mirrors. This is clearly not a nomadic people.

The clothes also distinguish them from other tribes. The women's bright embroidered black blouses are longer than those of the Rabari, and they wear patterned skirts and headcloths, huge necklaces of spiralled silver or cheaper metal, and large flat nose studs.

In our big white Ambassador we went to other villages, too: we saw painters, embroiderers and bell-makers. We stopped in Biber to see the Rama temple with paintings telling the story of the Ramayata. We rested in roadside tea stalls and ate burnt-milk sweets. And when we returned to Bhuj it took ages to wash the dust off our hair. I look forward to washing the dust of Kutch out of my hair again one day.



something to declare

True or false

"If you were really hip, you went to India."

True, at least according to the opening passages of David Tomory's *A Season in Heaven* (HarperCollins, £6.99). In the late Sixties and early Seventies, he writes, "You either stayed home and got into politics, the French Revolution of '68, the Vietnam demos, Red Rudi Dutschke in Berlin, or you went East". India was seriously fashionable, says Mr Tomory in his entertaining insight into the hippy trail. "If you were really hip – it was like being the first to wear a minidress – you went to India."

The book is written as a series of anecdotes along the trail. "It was all quite established. You went from the Gulbana to the Amir Kabir in Tehran, to the Crown in Delhi, to the

houseboats in Benares, to the Modern Lodge in Calcutta and you ended up in the Matchbox or the Hotchpotch in Kathmandu."

Crossing the border into India is remembered in vivid detail as a symbolic step along the journey – the smell, the greetings, the psychic (or psychotic) official. The most striking element is the arbitrary nature of the journey 30 years ago: no guidebooks, itineraries or checklists to tick off along the way. The vagaries of the journey were almost the whole point. "Sitting on top of a bus, we tossed a coin. Heads for Manali, tails for Dharmasala. It came up tails."

Rhiamon Batten

Indian cheap thrills

Things to do in India for £20 or less

1. Pay for 40 people to see the Taj Mahal at dawn, when it is almost deserted.
2. Get a tailor to make several pairs of cool, baggy cotton trousers, or copy your favourite garment.
3. Buy 40 vegetarian thalis in a cheap restaurant – a delicious mix of curried vegetables, dhal, rice and nan.
4. Travel 200 miles by taxi.

These are among tips in *The Guide*, free from any of 30 British branches of STA Travel.

Snap your way around the world

If you are an amateur photographer, and think your picture could be worth a thousand words, it could earn you £1,000. The clean, friendly but basic City Guest House is the only one in the old city and therefore the quietest. Rooms from Rs80. If you have to have air-conditioning, the Prince Hotel on New Station Road has rooms from around Rs400.

played at the Destinations '97 travel exhibition, to be held in London's Olympia from 6 to 9 February next year. All entries must be accompanied by an official entry form. Send a stamped addressed envelope to *Wanderlust* (Photo Comp), PO Box 1832, Windsor, Berks SL4 6YP.

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Moghuls & Maharajahs

visiting Agra (for the Taj Mahal) with optional visits to Fatehpur Sikri, Jaipur, Sikandra, Delhi & Kathmandu

Starting in October we shall be resuming our flight series direct from London Gatwick to Agra for the Taj Mahal and in the process avoiding the tedium of travelling to and from Delhi and permitting the traveller to see that which he has come to see and able to relax and explore other parts of Rajasthan at an easy pace and when the weather is at its most pleasant.

Our arrangement includes the International flight to and from Agra, visits to the Taj Mahal and Red Fort, seven nights accommodation at either the 5-star Agra Clarks Shiraz hotel or alternatively at the 5-star deluxe Moghul Sheraton at a modest supplement. A variety of optional visits to Jaipur, Fatehpur Sikri, Sikandra, Delhi and Kathmandu are available. Alternatively you may elect to just relax and enjoy the facilities of your chosen hotel.

See the Taj Mahal set in formal gardens on the River Jumna, which was begun in 1630 by the Emperor Shah Jahan for his favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal. The building is of white marble and has later continued to the Red Fort, a complete Moghul city in itself, built by Akbar and enclosed by turreted, red sandstone walls.

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Wyld Court: you could hear the stillness of the forest

'I really liked the iguanas'

Nicola Swanborough visits Wyld Court, a tropical rainforest near Reading in Berkshire

Hampstead Norreys is a fairly typical English village: it has two pubs, no duck pond and a winding, cow-parsleyed B-road that encourages the drive-through-and-miss-it factor. It's an unlikely place to find a rainforest. Tucked on to the edge of the chalky Berkshire hills, low stone walls, gabled gates and clematis-covered doorways combine with late summer hay to paint a picture of rural Britain. A tamarin monkey would surely be quite out of place.

Three years ago, in an ambitious conservation project, a series of rapidly decaying glasshouses in the village were restored to house a slice of perilously threatened life: the rainforest. Today, thanks to a sophisticated, computer-controlled system which regulates three different rainforest climates, Wyld Court Rainforest flourishes. While horses graze quietly in the fields outside, while an explosion of exotic plants twine themselves around one another within the glasshouses, unaware that they're a pane away from hostile frosts and biting winds.

Although primarily concerned with botanical life, Wyld Court also provides a home for some of the small mammals and creatures of the rainforests including exotic fish, tree frogs and iguanas. The tamarin monkeys have started to breed, a sure sign that the microcosmic project is mirroring real life.

This rainforest pulls no punches with its visitors: the fish bite, the plants are poisonous and children are not allowed to run. (The floor is often wet and slippery.)

On Monday the project is being handed over as a gift to the World Land Trust, enabling it to become a registered charity and look to the future with plans to extend. An educational centre is already in the pipeline.

The visitors

Lesley Steele-Perkins, a school health sister in east Berkshire, took her 11-year-old son Michael to Wyld Court Rainforest. Michael is a fish and reptile enthusiast.

Michael: I really liked the iguanas - they were the best bit - and the basilisk lizard. They can actually move, but you really have to look to see them as they are so well camouflaged. Seeing them in their aviary with plenty of places to hide and climb made me realise how little space our school iguana has to live in. He's in a sort of tank. It's given me a lot of ideas about how we could improve things for him and I'm going to have a word at school.

There are some really interesting fish at Wyld Court and lots of terrapins. If you looked closely you could catch glimpses of guppies darting through the water.

I liked the plants, too, though I don't know all their names like I do with the fish and reptiles. It's a great place to just wander round and look - I like looking. I'm not so keen on reading all the information about the plants. I just find it interesting to look at the different shapes and sizes of the leaves. The carnivorous plants were my

favourites, although I liked the giant lily-pads too. Some of them grow as large as 8ft in diameter.

You can't imagine that it's a real rainforest because there are concrete paths and proper steps, but I don't think it matters. It's a really good place to go and it does give you a feel for the jungle.

Lesley: Michael and I were fortunate enough to be the first visitors of the day when we went to Wyld Court. It was wonderful wandering through the three glasshouses with the rainforest to ourselves.

It was very atmospheric. You could hear the stillness of the forest and the rain dripping on the leaves. It's all very calm and peaceful.

The lowland tropical section really takes you by surprise. One minute you're admiring the plants and the next you are totally engulfed in a dense cloud of steam - it's impossible to see five yards in front of you.

The plants are incredible, and so diverse. I was quite stunned by how healthy and lush they all look. A lot of them are related to the types of houseplants you can buy in the supermarket and then watch as the leaves die and fall off when you bring them home. But at Wyld Court all the species seem to flourish. A lot of them are actually at their best during our winter months, so it's a great place to go when it's cold and wet, especially as it's all inside.

My favourite plants by far were the giant lily-pads. They are so restful on the eye. Some of the species change colour and sex throughout

the day. The forest is always changing. There are several different types of tamarins - tiny monkeys which are all on the endangered species list. It really brings it home to you how important the rainforest is as a natural habitat for so many species, and how vital it is that we preserve what is left of them.

The whole of Wyld Court makes you want to draw up a chair and relax with a book - it's a very peaceful place. I love the gentle sound of the waterfall and the background tape of the rainforest requiem.

The deal

Location: Wyld Court Rainforest is in Hampstead Norreys near Newbury, Berkshire (01635 200221).

Price: adults, £3.50; senior citizens, £3; under 14s £2; under fives, free.

Opening times: March to October, 10am-5.30pm; November to February, 10am-4.30pm. Closed Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Facilities: toilets, drinks machine, picnic area - though no food available as yet. Wheelchair access - rainforest paths are good, if slippery. Gift shop: beautiful selection of tasteful books and gifts, all on the theme of the rainforest.

Warning: the rainforest is children friendly but the plants and animals aren't. Many of the plants are poisonous, and there are a lot of deep tanks, so children should always be carefully watched to make sure they do not fall in.

A weekly round-up of outings for children

'ARE WE NEARLY THERE?' Theme parks

1066 and all that... Theme parks get a lot of criticism for commodifying culture and turning history into "heritage", but if you're not a complete purist some of the country's historical sights can offer children an exciting introduction to history. This is a selection of special events taking place this weekend.

Jorvik Viking Centre
Experience the atmosphere, sounds and smells of a thousand years ago as life-like dummies and costumed interpreters bring the streets of Jorvik to life. The excavated remains of actual Viking houses are revealed along the way. Undercover, so good for a rainy day.

Coppergate, York (01904-653000), 9am-5.30pm. Adult, £4.95; child £3.25. Family, £15.00.

Rievaulx Abbey
Using authentic copies of medieval instruments the Hautbois will entertain visitors to this 12th-century priory with music from the age of the Black Prince. The show runs between 2pm-3.30pm today and tomorrow and features knackers (small round Arabic drums brought back from the Crusades) and an early lute called an udd. The costumed couple will happily chat about the instruments. If all that sounds a little civilised, fidgety children over seven can be consoled with the idea of post-performance battle games. Warring youngsters will be provided with an assortment of costumes and harmless medieval weaponry.

Nr Helmsley, N.Yorks YO6 5LB (01439-798 228). Adult, £3; £2.25 conc; child, £1.50; u-5s, free.

Pevensey Castle
Commemorating the 930th anniversary of the landing at Pevensey by Duke William of Normandy, battle lines will be drawn once again between Normans and Saxons. Seething Saxons ousted from their homes will set up camp outside the castle with five-foot long broad axes. Inside, the 200 disciplined infantry-men and deadly archers of the Norman army prepare for battle from noon today and tomorrow. The full battle ensues at around 3pm each day, but waiting visitors can watch displays of horsemanship by the 12th light Dragoons (sporting Norman battle dress), or take a look at the day-to-day domestic life inside the Saxon camp.

Pevensey, E.Sussex, BN24 5LE (01323-762 604), 10am-6pm. Adult, £4; £3 conc; child, £2; u-5s, free.

Warwick Castle
Standing on the banks of the river Avon, this fine medieval castle played a pivotal role in the Wars of the Roses. It was also home to hunchbacked ruler Richard III, before he met his death at Bosworth. Tour gardens landscaped by Capability Brown or move inside for a look at Marie Antoinette's clock and Cromwell's death mask. Today the jailer will be guarding the Dungeons and Torture Chamber (always firm favourites with blood-thirsty kids) and a Red Knight patrolling the grounds on horseback.

Warwick Castle, Warwick, Warwickshire CV34 4QU (01926-495 421), 10am-6pm. Adult, £8.75; £6.50 conc; child, £5.25; family £24.50.

Take a car and 5 people to France for £10 with THE INDEPENDENT

On 7 October The Independent will be celebrating its tenth anniversary. As part of the celebrations, we are offering every reader the chance to take a day trip to France to stock up for Christmas, with a car and up to five people for £10. You can take your car on Hoverspeed's Dover to Calais or Folkestone to Boulogne routes for only £10 (£20 on Saturdays), or alternatively, travel as a foot passenger on the Folkestone to Boulogne route and pay just 10p.

The season ticket allows you to take as many day trips from Dover to Calais or Folkestone to Boulogne as you like until 30 June 1997 with a car and up to five people for only £10 (£20 on Saturdays) each time you travel.

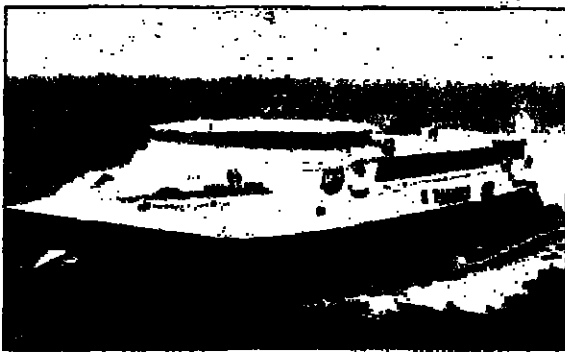
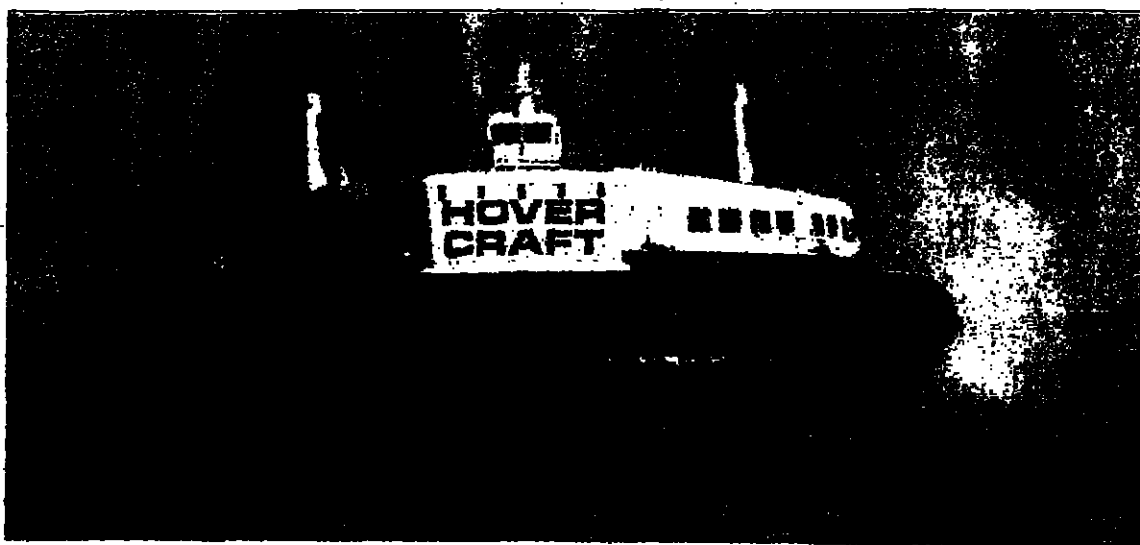
The normal day trip fare for foot passengers is £10 and the price for a car plus five people, £55. The Channel crossings with Hoverspeed are either aboard Hovercraft or SeaCat, both of which offer duty-free goods. Exclusive to Independent readers, Hoverspeed is offering 10% off all duty and tax free goods when you spend over £30 in one transaction. A voucher will be supplied with your day trip tickets and is valid until 20 December 1996.

How To Qualify

To participate in our offer, you must collect four differently numbered tokens from the eight we will be printing in The Independent and the Independent on Sunday. You will need to complete a booking form (printed on Tuesday 1 and Saturday 5 October) and send it with your tokens and payment to the address shown on the booking form. Alternatively, for those travelling by car, once you have collected your tokens, you can make a credit card booking (up to 16 October) by calling Hoverspeed reservations. See Tuesday's booking form for further details.

Today we print token 1; token 2 will be printed in tomorrow's Independent on Sunday.

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1. The promotion is subject to availability.
2. If EuroSave are unable to confirm your booking or if your crossing is cancelled by Hoverspeed all monies will be returned to you, no other refunds will be made.
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6. Minimum postal booking notice is 14 days, 24 hours notice must be given for telephone bookings.
7. Once EuroSave have received your booking form, they will send your validated season ticket together with your first day trip tickets.
8. The season ticket will entitle you to travel with a car and up to five people for £10 (£20 on Saturdays) each time you travel. The season ticket is valid for day trips only and can be used until 30 June 1997.
9. Maximum of 5 people per car - no trailers, caravans, minibuses or transit sized vans are allowed.
10. EuroSave will endeavour to despatch tickets at least 10 days prior to departure.
11. Valid passports/visas are required.
12. Carriage by sea is subject to terms and conditions of the carrier, copies of which are available on request.
13. This offer is only valid for day trips, vehicles carrying overnight luggage will be refused at the port. A minimum of 4 hours must be spent in France.
14. Photocopies of tokens are not acceptable.



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RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	£20,000	0.94N	11.90N	nil 56 days
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Direct Line	0181 667 1121	Instant Savings	Instant	£10,000	5.50 Year
Direct Line	0181 667 1121	Instant Savings	Instant	£50,000	5.75 Year

Teachers' BS	01202 887171	Bullion	Postal	£500	4.80 1/2 Year
Alliance & Leicester	0645 228558	Instant Direct	Postal	£5,000	5.40 Year
Bristol & West BS	0800 901109	Instant Access Postal	Postal	£10,000	5.85 Year
Bristol & West BS	0800 901109	Instant Access Postal	Postal	£25,000	6.05 Year

Nottingham BS	0115 956 4422	Direct Reserve	20 day P	£2,500	6.10 Year
Nottingham BS	0115 956 4422	Direct Reserve	20 day P	£25,000	6.20 Year
Nottingham BS	0115 956 4422	Direct Reserve	20 day P	£25,000	6.40 Year
Cheltenham & Gloucester	0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day P	£100	5.50 Year

Westward Benson	01202 502404	HICA	Instant	£2,500	5.00 Month
Halifax BS	01422 335333	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	4.00 Overdraft
Cheltenham BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	4.35 Year
Cheltenham BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£25,000	4.65 Year

Bristol & West BS	0800 202121	Year Plus Bond	2/2/98	£5,000	6.25F Maturity
Northwest Bank	0500 505000	Postal Deposit Bond	31/12/98	£2,500	7.45F Year
Bradford & Bingley BS	0800 592588	Millennium Bond	20/1/99	£1,000	7.25F Year
Skipton BS	0800 603010	Fixed Rate Bond	31/10/01	£5,000	7.55F Year

Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.50F Year
Northwest Bank	0800 200400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F Year
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£1,000	7.00 Year
Principality BS	01222 344188	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£500	6.80 Year

Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.50F Year
Northwest Bank	0800 200400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F Year
Midland Counties BS	01372 747771	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.20 Year
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£1,000	7.00 Year

AG Life	0181 680 7172	1 year	£50,000	4.85FN Year
Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388	2 year	£50,000	5.60FN Year
Pinnacle Insurance	0181 207 9007	3 years	£3,000	5.80FN Year
Pinnacle Insurance	0181 207 9007	4 years	£3,000	6.10FN Year
Pinnacle Insurance	0181 207 9007	5 years	£3,000	6.50FN Year

Newcastle Bank Gibraltar	00 350 76168	Nova Access	Instant	£25,000	6.30 Year
Northwest Bank, Guern	01481 714600	Offshore 30	30 day	£25,000	6.35 Year
Yorkshire (QMA) Ltd	01524 663432	90 Day Notice	90 Day	£25,000	6.55 Year
Northwest Bank, Guern	01481 714600	Millennium Bond	1/1/00	£10,000	7.50F Year

Investment Accounts	1 month	£20	4.75 Year
		£500	5.25 Year
		£25,000	5.50 Year
		£25,000	6.00 Month
		£25,000	6.25 Month

Capital Bond	Series J	5 years	£100	6.65F Maturity
First Option Bonds		12 months	£1,000	6.00F Year
			£20,000	6.25F Year
Pensioner's Guaranteed Income Bond	Series 3	5 year	£500	7.00F Month
NS Certificates (tax-free)	43rd issue	5 year	£100	5.35F Maturity
	9th Index linked	5 year	£100	2.50-rpi Maturity
	Issue H	5 year	£25	6.75F Maturity

P post only F fixed rate
N net rate A All withdrawals subject to 30 day loss of interest
All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.

Source: MONEYFACTS 01892 500677

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Investment Management

هكذا من الامل

The Pru takes on banks and building societies

Nic Cicutti examines the insurer's promises on savings and mortgages

The next time you consider the possibility of opening a new deposit account or taking out a mortgage, who will you be giving your custom to? From next week, the Prudential hopes you will be making a bee-line for its newly launched service.

The insurer is taking on banks and building societies at their own game, offering a range of home loans and two savings accounts which it claims beat the opposition into a cocked hat.

Initially, at least, the Pru is primarily hoping to convert its own existing customers to the new services it offers. The company has six million policyholders who receive payouts of £1bn each year in maturing investments.

Prudential's research shows that up to 70 per cent of that maturing money is still in the policyholders' building society accounts a year later. Clearly, grabbing a slice of that money back is what underpins the Pru's deposit accounts.

Similarly, the Pru's salespeople arrange £700m in mortgages for their clients every year. Except that until now the loans were arranged with other mortgage lenders. Again, diverting a chunk of that business back into its own coffers gives it a head-start when it comes to setting up a new bank.

The Pru hopes that the growing demand for telephone-based financial services – banking, mortgages or insurance – will allow it to offset the absence of a branch structure for its new bank. All the paraphernalia involved in a telephone operation are in place, with a new headquarters based in Dudley, in the West Midlands.

Martin Harris, chief executive at Prudential Banking, claims the products his new division is offering are those he once dreamed of when he worked at First Direct, the telephone bank launched by Midland Bank. He says customers have the benefit of knowing that they can contact any one of its 6,000 salespeople, who will there to help when needed. But all the warm, friendly phone people

and helpful salespeople in the world are of little use if the product you are selling is not up to scratch. Here, the Pru looks a bit more ordinary than it claims.

Underpinning both the savings and mortgage offerings are a set of guarantees. On the savings side, the guarantee is that the interest rate paid will beat the average of branch-based deposit accounts on offer from the top 10 banks and building societies.

Translated into pound signs, this means for its High Interest Deposit Account, which offers instant access to your money, a rate of 3.1 per cent gross is paid on deposits above £500. This rises progressively to 4.75 per cent on savings levels above £100,000.

Prudential's 60-Day Notice Account pays 3.85 per cent gross on minimum deposits of £2,000, rising to 5.85 per cent for sums above £100,000. In the second instance, the rates include a 0.5 per cent loyalty bonus if in each 12 months that an account is opened no more than two withdrawals are made and the balance remains above £2,000.

The Pru's guarantee means that its rates are currently about 1 percentage point above the average of its rivals' branch-based deposit accounts. There are two problems, however. The first is that the guarantee only applies until the end of next year. One could argue that at least it is in place for the next 15 months.

The second problem is that the Pru, despite its protestations, is not comparing like with like. The rates paid on its instant access postal account are beaten by Alliance & Leicester, which pays 5.4 per cent gross on an admittedly high initial deposit of £5,000. This rises to 6.3 per cent gross on deposits above £100,000.

Birmingham Midshires is also ahead of the Pru on its some of its postal account rates, offering slightly less. Others with better savings accounts are Bristol & West, Northern Rock, Yorkshire, First Direct and even Scottish Widows Bank, which was the first

insurer to set up a bank subsidiary and is now considering launching a mortgage range.

It is in the field of mortgages that the Pru does better, offering a range of reasonably priced loans. Although not quite the cheapest, they score highly in terms of their flexibility.

The Pru's variable rate is 6.99 per cent, with a discount of up to 0.7 per cent in place over the lifetime of the mortgage for loans with a loan-to-value ratio of 75 per cent, giving a true rate of 6.29 per cent. The interest charged rises to 6.69 per cent on a loan-to-value of 90 to 95 per cent. Repayment breaks are possible for up to six months.

The company also offers a variety of discounts and cashback deals and pledges that if cheaper rates become available they will be offered at the end of any discount period to both new and existing borrowers, unlike many other lenders. Mortgages are also transferable to a new home, while anyone switching to a Pru mortgage is offered a refund of their valuation fee, no booking or admin charges, and a special legal fees package.

More importantly, the Pru breaks with tradition in that it pledges not to operate a whole raft of hidden charges usually imposed by other lenders. Among the charges it refuses to impose are the full month's interest payable at whatever point in the month that a mortgage is taken out or repaid. In common with a handful of other lenders, it will credit any mortgage overpayments directly rather than at the end of the year. This means the actual cost of the loan falls more quickly.

As with Direct Line, the Pru also charges interest on a daily basis. In all, it estimates that its policy of openness will allow someone with a typical £50,000 mortgage to save over £600 during the loan's lifetime.

The Pru's entry into the telephone banking market is a bit of a curate's egg. But by stimulating competition among rivals, it may lead to better savings and mortgage products that all of us can take advantage of.



Moving house: The Pru offers mortgages that can be transferred to a new home

Photograph: John Lawrence

FEAR OF FINANCE

Nic Cicutti



Next week, I will be attending another of those august financial award dinners where everyone wears funny black suits and ties, eats indifferent food and listens to speeches. My host for the evening is Cornhill, the insurer well known for its cricket sponsorship.

Always being one to bite the hand that feeds me, I will be asking my hosts why it is that Cornhill declined to take part in the Money Marketing financial survey we write about elsewhere in this section.

Not just Cornhill. A number of other companies also refused to supply information to John Jenkins, the actuary at KPMG who helped bring out the survey. The refusals include Barclays Life, Hill Samuel, Irish Life, London & Manchester, Mercury Asset Management, Pearl, Refuge, Black Horse Financial Services, Sun Life of Canada, Royal Liverpool and National & Provincial Life, the building society's insurance arm now owned by Abbey National.

Between them, these companies have sold millions of policies to their customers. Yet they refused to let their names appear in these performance tables. According to John Jenkins, the argument tended to be that they no longer sold the specific policies for which details were being requested, so the information was not relevant.

Of course, that's true. But equally, so is the fact that many clients with the companies named above would like to know how their policies have fared compared with others – if only because, if they must increase their contributions into, say, a pension, it would help them to know whether there are better alternatives to channel their money.

One cannot avoid the conclusion that the companies have something to hide. It is interesting to note that the refusals do virtually no business with independent financial advisers, selling policies through their own armies of salespeople. This way they never face comparisons about the value for money of their products.

Readers of this column must make up their own mind as to whether the companies concerned are ones to do business with. I think what they are doing is just not cricket.

It is not often that I plug a new idea. But this one, by Torquil Clark, a firm of financial advisers in Wolverhampton, sounds good. The firm is launching Protect Direct, a telephone service selling term assurance, a no-frills form of life cover increasingly popular as an adjunct to mortgages.

Term assurance is simple: you pay a premium each month. If you die within a certain period your estate gets an agreed sum. Because it is so simple, competition in this market is mainly based on price. Protect Direct adds value by rebating about 65 per cent of the commission normally paid to an adviser. In many cases, this is equal to a whole year's premiums. If you ever need this type of insurance, it makes sense to call 0800 413186.

LOOSE CHANGE



Norwich and Peterborough Building Society is extending its fixed-price dealing service in Abbey National shares following the bank's takeover of National & Provincial Building Society. Investors pay a flat fee of £20, plus £2 each for up to three family members pooling their shares. Details on 01603 622265.

British Homes Stores is launching a loyalty card entitling clients of the store to discounts of up to 15 per cent on purchases. Details from any BHS store.

ShareLink, the execution-only broker, is launching a Footsie Bonus PEP, offering capital security, plus the value of any rise in the FT-SE 100 share index. An additional bonus of 25 per cent of the FT-SE 100 rise during the PEP's five-year life will also be paid. Call 0121 236 4848.

RBS Advanta is launching a new, no-fee Gold Visa Card with an APR of 11.9 per cent fixed until November 1997. The card includes a 56-day interest-free period, travel accident insurance and medical and legal helpline. Call 0800 077770.

Walter Richmond, an insurance broker, is launching a £5,000 contents policy aimed at landlords who let their properties on a part-furnished basis. Call 01628 4770.

launched a free phone line offering access to independent legal and financial advice for elderly people considering a move into care homes. Callers receive details of a solicitor near them who will offer a free initial consultation. Call 0800 998833.

Birmingham Midshires Building Society is launching a Guaranteed Income Plus retirement bond, paying 7.3 per cent fixed for five years. Call 0500 070707.

General Accident Life is offering a cashback mortgage with a variable rate of 6.99 per cent. Borrowers receive 5 per cent of their loan back, plus free mortgage indemnity on loans of up to 95 per cent of a home's value. Call 0500 100200.

Investors Intelligence and AIG Life are launching a Guaranteed Japanese Bond offering a 100 capital guarantee plus 100 per cent of the growth in the value of the Nikkei shares index, excluding dividends. The three and a half year bond has no basic rate income tax or CGT liabilities. Minimum investment is £5,000. Call 0800 300500.

Lloyds Bank is offering a Fifth High Income Deposit Fund, paying 6.3 per cent gross over two years and 5.7 per cent gross for one year. Monthly interest options are available. Minimum investment is £1,000. Details from all Lloyds Bank branches.

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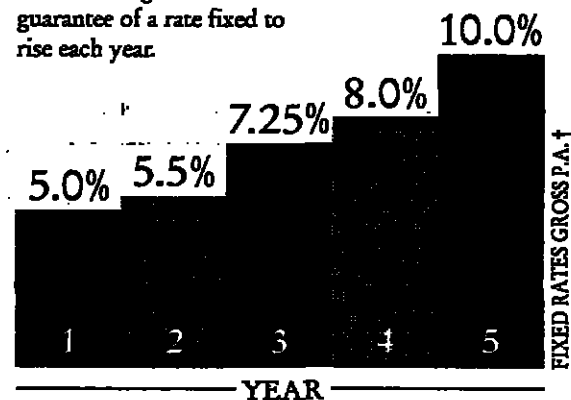
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The big picture

Scandal

Sun 10pm C4

Despite Ian McKellen's absurd bald wig in the part of Profumo, this is a slickly made version of his affair with showgirl Christine Keeler (Joanne Whalley-Kilmer) which helped bring down the Conservative Government in 1964. Michael Caton-Jones's direction is stylish, and he is well-served by a strong cast featuring John Hurt as the louché osteopath Stephen Ward and Bridget Fonda as Mandy "well, he would say that" Rice-Davies.

It's official - national politicians are about to go the way of the dinosaurs. Arthur C Clarke says so on a live satellite link from his home in Sri Lanka to the Science Museum in London, a means of communication he prophesied over 50 years ago. Tony Blair? John Major? Who cares? International business certainly doesn't.

Clarke appears on Simon Hoggart's new three-part series *The Hollow State* (Sat BBC2) looking into the globalisation of the economy. What this means in practice is that a businessman from Telford can manufacture supermarket carrier bags in China from polythene produced in Malaysia on machines made in Denmark. These are then imported to Britain for use in a supermarket in Telford. Where it all leads is anybody's guess - but it certainly puts the concerns of Eurosceptic MPs into perspective. Rather like a brontosaurus worrying about fleas.

After such profoundly materialistic concerns, the centuries-old debate (if that is the right word - Galileo might demur) between science and religion seems

strangely arcane. *Heart of the Matter* (Sun BBC1), has a Joan Bakewell-stirred debate, featuring, amongst others, religion-bashing scientist Richard Dawkins, Baroness Mary Warnock and (why does one think "inevitably"?), David Starkey. Is no moral sense deemed worth exploring nowadays without Starkey's scowling contributions?

Starkey calls human beings "pattern-making" creatures. He obviously hasn't listened to many 20th century orchestral composers. Neither have I (an early encounter with Olivier Messiaen left me bruised), but I will now, after the first part of Simon Rattle's ambitious new series on 20th-century composers, *Leaving Home* (Sun C4). The outgoing musical director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra calls his first programme *Dancing on a Volcano*, which refers to Alban Berg's comment about the carnival crowds in Munich on the night of the Reichstag fire of 1933.

Rattle has already come under attack from an unlikely alliance of highbrow modern music critics and Albert Hall flagwavers agast at his ignoring great British composers like Elgar and Vaughan Williams.

The Hollow State

Sat 8.10pm BBC2

Divided Memories Sat 9pm BBC2

Equinox Sun 7pm C4

Leaving Home Sun 9pm C4

Heart of the Matter Sun 10.40pm BBC1

But he makes it clear from the start that his brief is the abandonment of timidity, not a general overview. He makes a generally relaxed guide, albeit given to generalisation and the odd cliché. On the Vienna of Mahler, "it always smells sweet". Does it?

First comes the "retrieved memories" of the past, and the "absolute self-belief of the therapist" who is leading more and more people that they have a "past" and have since forgotten it. The longer one is in "therapy", the more the memories - and a surprising number of them - are false jobs and families.

And then, however, happened to Neanderthal Man (and his descendants) to be found playing for Wimbledon FC? Simon Hoggart has an intriguing mystery story that suggests the might have come into fatal contact with a group of people with more advanced communication skills (that's us, by the way). Simon Hoggart would probably say he is alive and well and living in the Palace of Westminster.

The big picture

World Half Marathon

Sun 4.05pm, BBC1

There is no doubt about it, Liz McColgan (who won this year's London Marathon) is the former world 10,000 metres champion did not fare well in the humidity of the Atlanta Olympics, but she was suffering from insect bite that day. In Palma, Majorca, tomorrow afternoon she is seeking to regain the IAAF World Half Marathon Championship she won in 1992. Don't bet against her.

Saturday television and radio

BBC1

7.00 *Bay City (R)* (7764664).
7.25 *News: Weather* (2755954).
7.30 *Children's BBC: The Morph Files*. 7.40 Robinson Sucroe. 8.05 *The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest*. 8.30 *The New Adventures of Superman*. Superman promises not to use his powers while on holiday with Lois. How sweet (R) (S) (3515956).
9.15 *Live and Kicking* (Guests include singer Peter "the paws" Andre, and London's Burning star Sean Bowers talking about his plans to sail round the world. (S) (81661596).
12.12 *Weather* (774916).
12.15 *Grandstand*. 12.20 *Football Focus*. 1.00 *News*. 1.05 *Cricket Focus*. 1.20 *Boxing*: last night's Commonwealth flyweight championship fight between Peter Cullshaw and Jack Russell. 1.50 *Racing from Ascot*: the 2.00 Cumberland Lodge Stakes. 2.35 *Diadem Stakes*. 3.20 *Queen Elizabeth II Stakes*. 3.55 *Tote Festival Handicap*. 4.05 *Motor Sport*: rounds 25 and 26 of the AutoTrader RAC British Touring Car Championship from Brands Hatch. 4.40 *Final Score* (77460374).
5.20 *News: Weather* (3043312).
5.30 *Regional News and Weather* (267515).
5.35 *Dad's Army (R)* (600683).
6.05 *Jim Davidson's Generation Game*. A hot-air balloon has to be deflated in less than two minutes - and other such fun and games (S) (965409).
7.05 *Due South (S)* (691732).
7.50 *The National Lottery Live*. Luther Vandross performs his new single (S) (232567).
8.05 *Casualty*. More hospital grief. A lad trying to steal rare bird eggs gets stuck up a cliff face, and a woman puts sleeping pills in her husband's drink. As you do (S) (246664).
8.55 *News and Sport: Weather* (Followed by National Lottery Update) (922664).
9.15 *Lethal Intent* (Bradford May 1995 US). The most overworked adjective in movie title history gets another outing in this unlikely nonsense about a long-lost (and formerly violent) father re-entering the life of his successful lawyer son and whisking him off on a hunting trip. Starring Andy Griffith and John Ritter (553645).
10.45 *Match of the Day*. Everton v Sheffield Wednesday is the main event (S) (3833041).
11.50 *They Think It's All Over (S)* (209393).
12.20 *The Top of the Pops (S)* (1272184).
12.55 *The Hellfire Club* (Robert S Baker and Monty Berman 1961 UK). Keith Michell tries to reclaim his father's estate, the Hellfire Club, years after running away to join the circus. Depraved cousin Peter Arne is out to stop him (1458946).
2.25 *Weather* (774916).
REGIONS. *Scott*: 12.15pm *Grandstand* from Scotland: 1.05 *Motor Sport*. 1.25 *Snooker*. 1.45 *Sportsman's Match of the Day*. 1.45 *Snooker*. 12.45 *They Think It's All Over*. 1.15 *Film: The Hellfire Club*. 2.45 *Weather*.

BBC2

6.00 *Open University: Computing* (2822393). 6.25 *The Spanish Chapel*, Florence (2841428). 6.50 *Molecular Engines* (3942331). 7.15 *Palazzo Venezia*, Rome: A Cardinal's Palace (7785157). 7.40 *The Search for the W and Z* (9561596). 8.05 *Culture and Society in Victorian Britain* (3635616). 8.30 *Open Mind: The Eco-Warriors* (2187751). 8.55 *Horses for Courses: An Evolutionary Radiation* (2106886). 9.20 *The Sordid Subject of Boeuf Bourguignon* (1454859). 9.45 *Resources, Environment and Politics* (6547634). 10.10 *Surviving the Exam* (3182480). 10.35 *Wendepunkte* (1213645). 11.00 *The World's Best Athlete* (5063770). 11.25 *Globo: The Arena Chapel* (6332664).
12.15 *Holiday Outings*. Valencia (7704157).
12.20 *East Anglian Gardens*. Hoveton Hall in Norfolk (R) (7785022).
12.30 *Film 96 with Barry Norman: Last Man Standing*. *Multiplicity*. Jane Fonda re-bazza'd from last Monday (S) (35003).
1.00 *Shanghai Express* (Josef von Sternberg 1932 US). "It took more than one man to change my name to Shanghai Lily", and all that, as Marlene Dietrich and lover Clive Brook fall into the hands of a Chinese bandit. Stylish and sly (9526886).
2.20 *Destiny Rides Again* (George Marshall 1939 US). Dietrich again, revitalising her career by going West, and playing the quixotic dance hall girl Frenchy in this satirical western in which sheriff James Stewart tries to charm an unruly town into lawfulness (5297138).
3.50 *Star Trek: Voyager*. Pilot episode for the latest Star Trek series (R) (S) (7480585).
5.20 *TOTP* (S) (9081138).
6.05 *Rhodes*. 2/3. Second sitting of the epic. Our empire-builder has a homo-erotic brush with a trainee clerk (S) (761454).
7.00 *News and Sport: Weather* (904954).
7.15 *Correspondent*. Charles Wheeler and Martin Bell report on the mood of the American people on the run up to the US elections (S) (613954).
8.00 *What the Papers Say*. Russell Davies reads the newspapers (S) (834549).
8.10 *The Hollow State*. See *Preview* (S) (299119).
9.00 *Fine Cut: Divided Memories*. See *Preview* (S) (6935).
10.30 *Close Up: The Killing Fields and Citizen Kane (R)* (S) (238645).
10.45 *Stanley and Iris* (Martin Ritt 1989 US). Romance most memorable for casting Robert de Niro and Jane Fonda together (S) (60077645).
12.25 *The Scarlet Empress* (Josef von Sternberg 1934 US). The third Marlene Dietrich movie of the year. Sternberg's obnoxious exercise in style, with Dietrich as Catherine the Great of Russia (Followed by *Weather*) (231707). To 2.15am.
REGIONS. *Scott*: 2.00pm *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. 3.00 *Conference 96*.

ITV/London

6.00 *GMTV 7.00 News*. 6.10 *Mole in the Hole*. 6.30 *Professor Bubble*. 6.50 *Bug Alert* 7.10 *Disney's Wake Up in the Wild Room*. 8.20 *Gargoyles*. 8.55 *Masked Rider* (9254515).
9.25 *Wew*. Martin Clunes sets off on a sponsored drive in a camper van to raise money for the Bona Fide Nigel, visits the studio with his band (18634139).
11.00 *The Noise*. Luther Vandross (see *National Lottery Live*) and Liverpool footballer Jamie Redknapp are the guests (S) (2596).
11.30 *The Chart Show (S)* (92428).
12.30 *The Black Music Awards* Boy George, Lisa 'Anson, Mica Paris and Normski are among the hosts at Le Palais in Hammersmith as the annual Black Music Awards are televised for the first time. The categories are soul, R & B, jazz, reggae, and hip-hop (R) (62157).
1.00 *News & Weather* (7009035).
1.05 *Local News: Weather* (7009206).
1.10 *Movies: Games and Videos* (5805549).
1.45 *Airport 80 - the Concorde* (David Lowell Rich 1979 US). Concorde flies from Washington via Paris to Moscow with members of the Russian and American Olympic teams on board in this late-in-the-cycle disaster movie. A motley crew includes Alain Delon, Robert Wagner, Sylvia Kristel and George Kennedy (4915846).
3.50 *Thunder in Paradise (S)* (6840683).
4.45 *News: Sport: Weather* (7673003).
5.05 *London Tonight: Sports Results* (Followed by *LWT Weather*) (8714206).
5.20 *New Baywatch* (New Series) The ITV autumn schedules really kick in with the return of the following three favourites... (S) (7786312).
6.15 *Clash of the Titans* (S) (802932).
7.15 *Blind Date (S)* (806677).
8.15 *Film: Fortunes* (S) (116683).
8.45 *News: Weather: Lottery Result* (Followed by *LWT Weather*) (907596).
9.00 *Brian Crozier - Alive and Dangerous (S)* (4461).
10.00 *Relax: Sunset* (Blake Edwards 1988 US). Decidedly unwhimsical costume comedy with Bruce Willis playing real-life movie cowboy Tom Mix, who's being coached in preparation for the advent of talkies by Wyatt Earp (played by a quietly upstaging James Garner). Mariel Hemingway and Malcolm McDowell co-star (S) (6312).
12.00 *The Lady Forgots* (Bradford May 1989 US). A woman disappears after a horse-riding accident, only to return home two years later. Unable to account for her absence, she turns detective and discovers that she has had a lover and another life. Donna Mills stars, naturally (S) (64342).
1.45 *Funny Business* (S) (64342).
2.15 *The Chart Show (R)* (S) (918829).
3.05 *ITV News Review* (850946).
3.55 *God Vibes (S)* (5744538).
4.00 *God's Gift (R)* (6256981).
4.55 *Night Shift (R)* (S) (1263897). To 5.05am.

Channel 4

6.00 *Sesame Street (R)* (3188022).
6.55 *The Magic School Bus (S)* (4114732).
7.30 *Dennis (R)* (7559886).
7.45 *First Edition* (754704).
8.00 *The Muppet Show* (435677).
9.00 *The Muppet Show* (S) (41848).
10.00 *Gazzetta Football Italia* (51138).
11.00 *Birtz (S)* (31374).
12.00 *Rawhide* (9390428).
12.55 *Goodbye Mr Chips* (Herbert Ross 1969 UK). Peter O'Toole is the best thing about this overblown musical version of James Hilton's bestselling account of his schoolmaster father being humanised by marriage and a lifelong contact with youth, the songs are dreadful. Petula Clark, Michael Redgrave and Sian Phillips support (3178670).
3.35 *The Big Break*. Struggling actors are the subject of this *Short Stories* documentary (R) (628403).
4.05 *The Making of an Englishman*. Kevin and Andrew MacDonald on their grandfather, the screenwriter Emeric Pressburger (R) (S) (7803206).
5.05 *Brookside Omnibus (R)* (S) (4139848).
6.30 *Reply to Reply (S)* (393).
7.00 *News Summary and Weather* (355664).
7.05 *The People's Parliament*. Today's motion is "Parents are responsible for their children's behaviour at school and should be fined if they persistently disrupt classes" (S) (233732).
8.00 *Voices in the Dark*. Professor Carlo Ginzburg recounts the story of a 16th-century miller who was burnt as a heretic (S) (2867).
9.00 *E.R. (R)* (S) (394119).
9.55 *Father Ted (R)* (S) (236770).
10.25 *WYD Birtz (S)* (476414).
11.25 *Dylan TV: Dylan Blend*. Compilation of the coffee advert parodies (S) (405480).
11.40 *Lesbian Bed Death*. The demise of sex in long-term lesbian relationships (S) (121567).
11.55 *Disgraceful Conduct*. Drama about a lesbian officer in the Royal Air Force whose career is threatened when a colleague reports her to the RAF Special Investigation Branch (S) (676652).
12.15 *Child of Mine*. Lesbians who have sought legal recognition of their positions as parents (S) (4805962).
1.00 *Shades of Desire*. Inter-racial lesbian couples (S) (149436).
1.20 *Linger (R)* (S) (8388707).
1.35 *Butch Femme*. How relevant is the notion of butch or femme identities to lesbians today? On this evidence, definitely so (R) (S) (2328184).
2.20 *Debbie Edwards (R)* (S) (3946252).
2.30 *Debbie Edwards (R)* (S) (3946252).
This is a gloriously glamorous affair in an omnibus collection of stories featuring the guests at a luxury Berlin hotel: Greta Garbo, John Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, Joan Crawford and Wallace Beery (92927). To 4.30am.

ITV/Regions

ANGIA
As London except: 12.30pm *Champions of the Future* (52157). 1.10 *Beach Volleyball* (6872293). 1.40 *Movies: Games and Videos* (9068813). 2.10 *Sumner* (53001). 2.55 *CineCl* (5473513). 3.50 *SeeQuest 2032* (6840683). 12.00 *Film: Dead Reckoning* (243542). 1.45am *Cartoon Knowledge* (9576813). 2.40am *Film: Home Front* (952747). 4.00am *Heller Sheller* (2279417). 5.00-5.30am *World of Sailing* (39523).
CHANNEL 4 NORTH EAST/NOIRSHIRE
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies: Games and Videos* (62157). 1.10 *Thunder in Paradise* (2386567). 2.00 *Cartoon* (4282729). 2.05 *Film: Carry on Regardless* (630138). 3.45 *York: Atwill* (365022). 5.50 *Channel 3 North East: Atwill* (6840683). 5.10 *Cartoon* (243542). 1.45am *Cartoon Knowledge* (9576813). 2.40am *Film: Home Front* (952747). 4.00am *Heller Sheller* (2279417). 5.00-5.30am *World of Sailing* (39523).
CENTRAL
As London except: 12.30pm *Premiere* (62157). 1.10 *Cartoon* (1774190). 1.25 *Dinosaurs* (6872297). 1.55 *Eastern Mix* (60993763). 2.25 *Movies: Games and Videos* (97487157). 2.55 *Arvill* (6473513). 3.50 *SeeQuest 2032* (6840683). 5.10 *Cartoon Knowledge* (9576813). 2.40am *Film: Home Front* (952747). 4.00am *Heller Sheller* (2279417). 5.00-5.30am *World of Sailing* (39523).
ITV
As London except: 12.30pm *West: No Naked Flames* (62157). Wales: *California off Beat* (6792502). 12.45 *Wales: Rugby 2000* (6670331). 1.40 *Film: The Accidental Tourist* (60742799). 3.50 *Rico Cartop* (6684867). 4.40 *West: ITV Sport Mini Classics* (6621955). Wales: *Let's Go* (6621955). 12.00 *Film: Dead Reckoning* (243542). 1.45am *Cartoon Knowledge* (9576813). 2.40am *Film: Home Front* (952747). 4.00am *Heller Sheller* (2279417). 5.00-5.30am *World of Sailing* (39523).
MEDIAN
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies: Games and Videos* (62157). 1.10 *Meridian: Motorsport* (6872293). 1.40 *Film: The New Adventures of Pippi Longstocking* (3134574). 3.45 *Cartoon* (6759480). 3.50 *SeeQuest 2032* (6840683). 12.00 *Film: Dead Reckoning* (243542). 1.45am *Cartoon Knowledge* (9576813). 2.40am *Film: Home Front* (952747). 4.00am *Heller Sheller* (2279417). 5.00-5.30am *World of Sailing* (39523).
WESTCOUNTRY
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies: Games and Videos* (62157). 1.10 *Champions of the Future* (6872293). 1.40 *Film: The New Adventures of Pippi Longstocking* (3134574). 3.45 *Cartoon* (6759480). 3.50 *SeeQuest 2032* (6840683). 12.00 *Film: Dead Reckoning* (243542). 1.45am *Cartoon Knowledge* (9576813). 2.40am *Film: Home Front* (952747). 4.00am *Heller Sheller* (2279417). 5.00-5.30am *World of Sailing* (39523).
SAC
As C4 except: 10.00am *Rawhide* (51138). 12.00 *The Avengers* (9390428). 3.55pm *Film: Powder River* (1265577). 4.55 *Fresh Fish* (4033770). 6.30 *Boy Meets World* (939). 7.00am *Film: Home Front* (952747). 8.20 *Sharon* (564645). 8.50 *Glas v Doran* (467119). 9.20 *Murder in the Heartland* (28924848). 11.10 *The Short Out* (4172251). 11.25-4.30am *Dylan TV*.

Radio

Radio 1

6.59 *Breakfast*.
7.00am *Clive Winters* 10.00
Dave Pearce 1.00 to 1.45
John Peel 7.00am *Danny Rampling*
9.00 *Radio 1 Rap Show* 12.00
Reggae Dancehall 12.00
Essential Mix: Live in Nottingham
4.00-7.00am *Charlie Janke*

Radio 2

6.00am *Mo Dutta* 8.05 *Brian*
Matthew 10.00 *Steve Wright's*
Saturday Show 1.00 *Carrot's*
Comedy Choice 1.30 *The News*
Huddlines 2.00 *Judi Spiers* 4.00
Nick Barclough 5.00 *Who?*
6.00 *Paul Oakenfold* 7.00 *Paul*
Hudnot and Blue 7.30 *The Joy*
of Music 9.30 *David Jacobs* 10.00
Sheridan Morley 12.05 *Joe*
McCarthy 4.00-7.00am *Mo Dutta*

Radio 3

6.00-7.00 *Record Review*.
7.00 *Building a Library*.
9.15 *Record Review*.
11.15 *Recess*.
12.00 *Private Passions*. Michael
Sheehy talks to Tim Black-
stone, Master of Birkbeck Col-
lege in the University of
London.
1.00 *News*: Simon Rattle - Home
and Away. Rotterdam Philhar-
monic. Michael Birtok explores
the work Rattle completed with
the orchestra he first conducted
in 1978. Haydn: Symphony
No 22 in E flat. Wieniawski:
Violin Concerto No 2. Enescu:
Romanian Rhapsody. Brahms,
arr Schoenberg: Piano Quartet
No 1.
3.00 *The Department Score*.
3.30 *Youth Orchestra of the*
World. David McGuinness in-
troduces music from the con-
certs given by the Chamber
Orchestra of the Estonian Mu-
sic Academy at Tallinn under
Peeter Pärt, and the 100-
strong Viena Youth Orchestra
of the Netherlands, conductor
Wim Brundiers. Mozart: Di-
vertimento in F. Marcello, trans-
cribed by J. S. Bach: Piano Concerto in
D minor. Thomas Wilson: Touch-
stone. Budon Orr: A Carmen
Fantasy for cello and orchestra.
Jean Ratz: Concerto for
Chamber Orchestra No 1.
5.00 *Jazz Record Requests*.
5.45 *Musical Matters*.
6.25 *Hippolyte et Arlequin*. Live
from the Palais Garnier, Paris.
Jean-Philippe Rameau's con-

Choice

Kaleidoscope (7.20pm R4)
looks back at the 1946 film
of *The Big Sleep*, and there
are more noir tones in a new
series of *Stargate* on Stage
(11.30pm R4), opening with
Tony Harrison (left) reading
work on Bosnia, Hiroshima
and such like.

transversal first opera. With Lau-
rent Naciri (baritone) as The-
seus, Lorraine Hunt (mezzo) as
Phaedra, Les Arts Floris-
sants/William Christie. Pro-
logue: Act 1. 7.35-7.55 This
Foot's One Concern (in Voice).
Acts 2 and 3. 8.55-9.15
Emancipating a Masterpiece.
Acts 4 and 5.
10.15 *Best Words*. Brian Morton
rounds up the best of the re-
cent releases on CD.
12.30 *Misterioso*. Ian Carr ex-
amines the first recordings made by
Thelonus Monk under his own
name at the age of 30. (1/8).
1.00 *Through the Night*.
1.01 *Orchestra Concert*. Saar-
brücken/Martha Argerich. Sym-
phony No 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 4

literary garbage

Are dons so far removed from everyday life that one working-class bloke looks like another?

david aaronovitch



Whenever I read stories of men who have been crushed by anings, or who have been experimenting with some exotic device for achieving solitary pleasure and now need to have it surgically removed, I tend to think "there but for the grace of God go I." Even if I do not use such aids myself, or go near such buildings, I can quite understand the circumstances giving rise to these accidents.

But this week's story about the tragic destruction of much of the valuable library of world-renowned Cambridge don, Sir Frank Kermode, goes beyond easy comprehension. Sir Frank (whose name I first heard on the radio, and thus expected to be spelled Commode) was moving house, and had packed many of his books and papers into cardboard boxes. That day the removals men were to pick them up. At the same time the unwanted detritus of many years had to be shifted, and the council's dust collectors were also due to make a "special collection" to take the rubbish to the dump.

Unfortunately (and amazingly) the dustmen called first, and were directed to the boxes of books by the septuagenarian professor, who asked to hear them off. I have been unable to discover whether the rubbish was subsequently carefully re-installed in the new house by the removals company; but in any case, by the time the error was detected many of the books had been physically compressed in one of those great lumbering manglers.

There are several extraordinary features to this tale which make it difficult to credit. Many will find it hard to believe that the dustmen called at all. There are areas of Britain where it is necessary for one of the inhabitants to hide behind the garden hedge on collection day, and jump out in front of the refuse lorry, so that it has no option but to stop. At this point his or her neighbours emerge and - before they can be prevented - throw their rubbish bags in the back. And even then there is no guarantee that they won't be thrown

out again. They must view Cambridge à la Kermode with envy. I worry lest they decide to travel to Sir Frank's house, and leave all their refuse outside.

But even allowing for the fact that Cambridge may be better served than some cities, it would seem odd that the cultured knight should not notice that he was dealing with dustmen rather than moving men. As David Hopkins, the council officer responsible rather acidly commented, "We have large white and green dustcarts with a huge hole in the end where the men stick the rubbish. Usually when people see a refuse truck and a couple of dirty blokes, there isn't a problem."

This would seem, therefore, to place the blame squarely on Sir Frank himself. Does he therefore belong to a class of person so removed from the grubby encounters of everyday life, that one working-class sort of bloke looks pretty much like another? The sort of chap, in fact, who would be likely to stop Gary Lineker in a restaurant and ask for a gin and tonic? Or who will happily accept the right of a burglar to wander around his home stealing things, providing the thief looks confident and has a card inside a clear plastic holder?

This is, I think, unfair. Close textual analysis of the Kermode saga reveals that the dustmen involved were rather nattily dressed in "blue shirts and orange trousers". In other words, they did not look like the refuse collectors of old, but squeaky clean, new, skilled garbage operatives. For this is increasingly an era of image creation for all. We are becoming used to slogans such as Welcome to Camden; Huddersfield's working for you; Council Services, Your Services; and so on. It's a ten to one bet that many image-conscious garbage operatives are doused with a pleasant (if inexpensive) eau de Cologne by their supervisors between collections. So now not even the smell is likely to give them away. Or, as Lonnie Donegan didn't once sing, "My old man's a dustman, 'e wears a bowler hat".

Harriet and the heroine: battle royal in Blackpool

By Polly Toynbee

The battle between Barbara Castle, 85, and Harriet Harman, 46, over the future of pensions is a curious event - a mighty clash of swords between the moderniser of yesterday and the moderniser of today. Whoever wins, the blood of a good woman will be spilt on the floor at Blackpool next week.

For in her finest hour, Mrs Castle was the woman who very nearly succeeded in shaping the old union-bound Labour party into a modern social democratic force. How extraordinary to find her now shoulder to shoulder with one of those who destroyed her - Jack Jones, pensioners' champion, but formerly one of the granite-hard, trade union rocks upon which her ship foundered.

"Who exactly is Barbara Castle?" asked a timid young colleague, making some of us feel old. I first remember her when I was eight or nine at a May day rally in Battersea Park. There she stood on the back of an open lorry, flaming hair blowing in the spring air, flaming oratory billowing out into the wind. She wore a diaphanous red scarf and she looked like a Soviet poster. I fell in love with her as did so many others.

But those were not her finest hours, those days as a socialist heroine and keeper of the eternal Bevan flame. They may have been her most enjoyable hours, for playing La Passionaria - even in the moderate climes of British politics - is far more fun than the hard grind of real politics. (Fun in lots of ways - for her publisher charmingly regaled a party a couple of weeks ago with a story of Aneurin Bevan making a "passionate" pass at her once upon a time.) No, her finest hour was in 1969, the year of her defeat which led to Labour's defeat, the year she performed her great act of bravery.

As Secretary for Employment and Productivity, her socialist lead her to a firm belief in a price and incomes policy. But the explosion of unofficial strikes beyond the control of the unions threatened not only a fair distribution of wealth, but also the public's sense of good order and justice in those far-off days with virtually no trade union law.

For my young colleague, this is a flavour of the times: a wild cat walk-out at the Gilling brake factory was the last straw for Castle. It was the 57th there in 18 months and led to the lay-off of 5,000 other car workers in an inter-union dispute over an oil valve. Undaunted by the Siamese symbiosis between Labour and unions, known sardonically as Tignoo (This Great Movement of Ours), she set out to change the law in a White Paper, "In Place of Strife".

Castle proposed legal sanctions: no strikes without a 28-day cooling-off period and compulsory strike ballots - no more factory gate show-of-hands decisions. Suddenly, the socialist darling became the demon. Ms Harman knows the feeling. The left and the unions - Jack Jones, in particular, leader of the mighty TGWU - rose up against her. Jim Callaghan, embittered Home Secretary greedy for Wilson's job, rattled and by June, despite strong public enthusiasm for it, the policy fell - to be replaced with a much-mocked commitment by the unions to "Solemn and Binding" agreements with no legal force. The next year, perhaps partly as a result, Labour lost the election.

So what has become of Mrs Castle's brave modernising instincts now? Is it the call of the wild, personified by Jack Jones, that summons her back to her more romantic youth? I see the old fire in her eye. As the pensioners' Passionaria, she will ride into battle at the conference and stir the coals of many an old heart. Raise pensions for all! Return to the (very short) time when they were linked to earnings not to prices!

She is right, the real value of the state pension is falling fast. But the demise of the National Insurance system is as necessary now to Labour and Ms Harman, as reform of trade union law was to Mrs Castle's party. It is one of the last great sacred cows lying across the tracks (so sacred, in fact, that Peter Lilley still pays vigorous verbal obeisance to the principle). Labour's commitment to increase universal benefits -

child benefit and pensions - in its last manifesto helped cost it the election. It attracted few votes and was so expensive it scuppered any more imaginative spending plans.

Ms Harman is no Barbara Castle. A delicate, middle-class English rose, not a firebrand, she is a product of a more modern party where women can be ordinary mothers, not role-model revolutionaries. But she has been torched by the old guard of the party just as Castle was before her, for her decision to send her son to a grammar school. Castle, being childless, never knew the agonising personal dilemma of the London Labour politician deciding where to educate their children. Many in the Labour Party of the Sixties and Seventies now feel some guilt for sacrificing their children's

interests by sending them to bad schools to further their parents' political ambitions. Harman did what every decent mother should.

If her run-in over education was bruising, then this pensions battle runs mainline into the heart of old Labour. For the dream of Beveridge's welfare state was that all would pay in and all would pay out, with the universal pension as the bedrock of the scheme. In those days a universal pension made sense because to be old was almost certainly to be poor. Nowadays that has

changed beyond recognition. Each year the newly retired are better off and the distribution of wealth everywhere, including among the old, is changed beyond recognition.

The bottom third of pensioners are poor and there will be many poor for a long time - though a higher proportion were on social security in 1979. The middle third have small occupational pensions that take them just above benefit level. And a top third is now pretty well off. This top group is growing fastest, as more and more retire with reasonable occupational pensions.

Ms Harman wants any available money to be targeted on the poorest. An increase in universal benefits - pensions or child benefit - does nothing at all to help the poorest because they have it deducted from their income support. Even in Beveridge's day, the pension was never enough to live on alone and had to be topped up for those with no other money. In other words, universal benefits target the better off, not the poor.

Mrs Castle is calling for an increase for rich and poor alike, an expensive homage to the old National Insurance ideals. It would cost £5.5bn - money that would have to be raised in taxes or taken from other spending projects.

Underlying this fierce debate is a last-ditch attempt to hold on to the National Insurance principle - but increasingly people are questioning why the state pays out so much to those who do not need it.

To anyone under 40, National Insurance means little more than extra bits taken off their pay. They have little idea of the fine spirit it embodied 50 years ago. They have no idea what it entitles them to, since there is no real insurance fund and the sums paid out are decided at the whim of the government of the day. It is now a sham and a fraud.

But when Mrs Castle rises to the podium at Blackpool we shall hear the high rhetoric of the old days - all the romance that surrounded the post-war birth of the welfare state. It will be the last gasp of a bygone era. If Jack Jones yet again manages to haul out the unions to dish Labour's modernisers, someone ought to remind Mrs Castle of what he did to her - and to the party in 1969. Old ghosts will arise, charmingly seductive to the nostalgic, but they are the voices of a past Mrs Castle would do well to remember.

Barbara Castle was brought down by the old party warriors of her day. She should remember that when she tries to defeat Harriet Harman's pension plans



A wasted chance for peace, if not love

How hard it is to create something new in this world, and how easy it is to destroy it. It took only a few hours to demolish the delicate web of relations that had been woven between Palestinians and Israelis after 100 years of animosity. Of what was that web made? Of the most abstract things: much good will on both sides, war fatigue and, especially, the maturity and readiness of some great leaders, who in the wisdom of age were able to rise above their fears, and rebel against their own mentalities.

During the past two years we were able to begin to speculate on how real peace between Israel and its neighbours might look. Peace, I emphasise, not love. But then who looks for love between nations? The main thing is the change in categories of feeling and thinking: it suddenly became clear, to the surprise of many Palestinians and Israelis, that if you cast aside your stereotypes and see the enemy as a human being, you discover that he is a person like yourself. It turned out that a person - and a nation - could decide it was no longer prepared to continue to be the victim of a stagnant view of the world, of a narrow interpretation of its own history. Maybe that sounds banal, but the events of this week show to what extent all of these stereotypes and how the use of force is our



Patiently constructed hopes for a positive change in Arab-Israeli relations lie in ruins. Israel's belligerent new leaders are to blame, says David Grossman

The opportunity for peace revealed to us that you do not have to live every part of your life in the dichotomous framework of "victim or master". The three years since the signing of the Oslo agreement instilled in Israelis and Palestinians the feeling of freedom, of the beginning of a long recovery. Here and there new ties were made - economic, cultural, even military. A routine of working together began, and mechanisms were created that succeeded, with great discernment, through a process of mutual education, in liquidating fear of opposition to peace. New personal friendships were established. Let me give one small example: when more than 50 Israelis were murdered last February in suicide attacks by Hamas extremists, a Palestinian friend called me from Ramallah and offered to donate blood to the wounded.

The process has been difficult and bitter and bloody. Most Israelis, and most Palestinians, are still a long way from the lofty, hopeful feeling I described. In fact, the concessions that Oslo forced both sides to make led to more anxiety for many, and to a sense that the other side was tricking them. These people were pushed one more, decisive step towards the brink.

The Oslo agreement of 1993 reflects this ambivalence. Only at first glance was it a "peace of the brave", as Arafat termed it. Anyone who read the agreements and examined the maps

understood that the bravery had been enough only to break down the psychological barriers, but not to create a deep and fundamental change in relations between the two peoples. The agreement - which provided for leaving Israeli settlements where they were and which lacked the West Bank into a checkerboard of detours and roadblocks and areas of Israeli control - didn't have much of a chance from the start.

I want to believe that a rational and flexible government - like the Rabin-Peres administration in its later stages - would have been smart enough to repair the flaws in the agreement while continuing the process, in the hope that the majority of Israelis would, slowly, recognise the great blessing that real peace could bring. The greatness of Rabin and Peres was that at a certain point (not at the beginning of the process) they defined for themselves the final goal - true peace - and decided to ignore all the obstacles along the way to it, including disturbing violations by the Palestinians, and the temptations of the use of force, Israel's traditional way of communicating with the Arabs.

Netanyahu has a different final goal, one that is becoming nauseatingly clear as time goes on. Of course he wants peace. Who doesn't want peace? But everything he does indicates that he wants some sort of abstract peace, one without

concessions, one without a partner. His virtual fantasy peace led us this week straight into a nightmare.

But the peace process created another new, decisive fact: Israel is today a part of the Middle East. After decades of conflict, several important Arab states came to understand that they had to accept Israel's presence. This was a huge achievement for Israel, one that makes real a dream that its leaders had always evoked. That dream carries a price tag - it requires that we grow up and start to act more responsibly. Israeli governments can no longer do whatever they like in the region and solve every problem by force of arms alone.

As long as Israel was entirely isolated here it allowed itself, sometimes with great justice, to treat all those around it as absolute enemies and to strike back with great force against any provocation. Today, Israel's ties with Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians restrict and complicate its responses. Today Israel has a lot to lose in the Middle East. Worsening relations with the Palestinians will lead to a tragic deterioration in relations with Egypt and Jordan. The reverse is also true - progress in one channel will strengthen others.

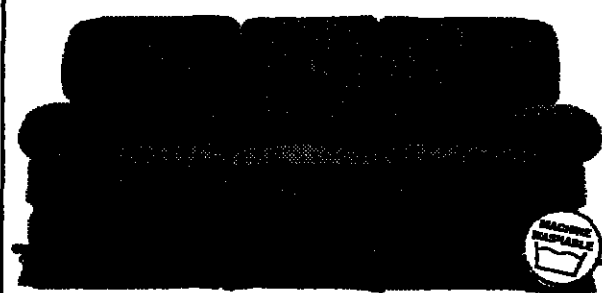
Under Netanyahu's leadership, Israel is being dragged again and again into impulsive and irresponsible actions. It is humiliating the Palestinians and

treating them with contempt. Netanyahu played games of prestige for weeks before finally deigning to meet with the head of the Palestinian Authority, as if only the Palestinians had an interest in such a meeting. One hundred days after the elections, Netanyahu is still refusing to honour Israel's signature on the Oslo agreement and to redeploy Israeli forces in Hebron, and government ministers are building more and more houses in the settlements and creating a situation that, perhaps, only a horrible war will be able to solve.

Netanyahu today represents all that is arrogant and belligerent in Israeli politics - those very traits we had just begun to recover from. This latest deterioration in the situation will, of course, lead his supporters to declare: "We told you - you can never trust the Arabs. We gave them guns and they're using them to kill us. Between us the sword will always rule." I, and those who think like me, also see in these events support for our opinions, but there is one decisive difference: we have already tried the way of conflict and battle, and we have discovered that violence leads to ruin. But the road to peace... that road we have but barely trodden. And today it looks longer and farther away than ever.

David Grossman is an Israeli novelist. His latest work is 'The Book of Intimate Grammar'.

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Kirkdale



MICHAEL HARRISON

For the past 17 years, competition and privatisation have been the defining themes of the Government's industrial policy. Now, as it approaches the fag end of this Parliament, it is left with three stinkers on its hands

Healthy competition is giving Lang a headache

Mr Lang, President of the Board of Trade, will very shortly find himself juggling with three potatoes of the middling to hot variety. Yesterday he received the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report into the competing bids for South West Water. The Office of Fair Trading is due any day to submit its recommendation on whether Stagecoach's takeover of the train leasing company Porterbrook should be referred to the MMC. And Mr Lang is about to receive a similar tome advising him what to do about the British Airways-American Airlines alliance. In each case, the decision Mr Lang reaches will have important consequences for competition. In each case, privatised companies are centre-stage.

What could be more appropriate? For the past 17 years, competition and privatisation have been the defining themes of the Government's industrial policy. Now, as it approaches the fag end of this Parliament, it is left with three stinkers on its hands. What is more important? Remaining true to its instincts that healthy competition is the best guarantee of vibrant markets? Or remaining loyal to the companies that it privatised?

By and large, successive secretaries of state have opted for the former. There was a temporary hiatus when Michael Heseltine was in charge at the Department of Trade and Industry. He rolled back the tide of both competition and privatisation by supporting a national champions policy and failing to

get the Royal Mail sold off. With Mr Lang's arrival, however, DTI strategy has reverted to the norm as championed by the likes of Norman Tebbit and Peter Lilley. In John Bridgeman, the Director General of Fair Trading, Mr Lang has a like-minded ally.

They will need to be strong and certain in their convictions because the protagonists in each of these three mergers have presented a powerful argument for why they should be allowed to go about their business unfettered.

The argument goes something like this. If you stop us from proceeding, UK plc will be the loser. Foreigners will come and take over our industries or take away our market share. If you allow us to proceed but impose conditions on us that are unacceptable, we will walk away and the consumer will be the loser.

Now there can be little dispute that privatisation has produced substantial benefits. Freed from the constraints of Whitehall control, these former state-owned businesses have become vastly more efficient, versatile and profitable. There is an argument to be had, however, over the way the spoils have been divided up between shareholders and customers. The electricity industry, for instance, has already returned more capital to investors than it was privatised with and the water industry is heading the same way.

BA and Stagecoach and Severn Trent and Wessex, the two suitors for South West Water, would have us believe that if they are

allowed to proceed there will be more efficiency gains and more benefits as a result for consumers.

In reality these deals are about building ever bigger and more dominant empires first, enhancing shareholder value second and improving the lot of the consumer third.

For that reason the concessions extracted in return for allowing them to go ahead must be significant. In the case of BA and American, the minimum concession must be the surrender of sufficient slots and associated airport facilities at Heathrow to make increased competition a reality, not just a promise.

In the case of Severn Trent and Wessex, the water regulator, Ian Byatt, can realistically demand price cuts of at least 20 per cent for customers of South West Water alongside lower bills for customers of the two bidding companies as a condition for approval.

It is more difficult to see what undertakings Stagecoach can give to mitigate the effects of allowing it to vertically integrate its passenger rail franchises with a company that supplies the rolling stock. The scope for sweetheart deals is obvious. More seriously, if Stagecoach is allowed to proceed, what is there to prevent the other two leasing companies from teaming up with train operators? In that event, smaller rail operators would be forced to lease their rolling stock from competitors, and powerful ones at that.

Mr Lang could probably do without these headaches with the party conference just a

week away. But he should not be distracted by the political noise. They could be three of the last decisions he makes as Secretary of State. For that reason alone, he should get them right.

Will Clarke be bold enough to be boring?

Speaking of political survival invariably springs the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, to mind. Earlier this week he enraged the Eurosceptic wing of the Tory party with a piece of provocation that was as wanton as it was bold. The Eurosceptics believe the Government's only hope of avoiding nemesis at the polls is to reject economic and monetary union decisively and rule out British membership of a single currency in the lifetime of the next Parliament.

Mr Clarke, in Dublin for the EU finance ministers meeting, suggested, on the contrary, that it would be "pathetic" for Britain to delay entering EMU. The outrage from the John Redwood camp and the Eurosceptic press was fearful to behold. Demands for his resignation flew thick and fast.

Now the Chancellor is at it again, dropping as heavy a hint as you like that backbenchers should not expect him to deliver a tax-cutting budget to save their skins come polling day. In an interview with London's *Evening Standard*, the Chancellor says: "Tax cuts can only happen if they are in the inter-

ests of the economy. In the past there have been criticisms made of tax cuts which have taken place in the face of rising consumer spending. That is something else for the "tax cuts at any cost" brigade to think about."

Now juxtapose that comment with the latest statistical evidence from the high street. Retail sales are bounding ahead at an annual rate of more than 4 per cent, the housing market looks as if it has made the decisive break back into positive territory and inflationary pressures remain remarkably subdued. It is not unknown for Chancellors to keep the markets and the voters guessing in the run-up to a Budget. But if Mr Clarke is as bold as his word then the last Budget before the election will indeed be the prudent, boring, steady-as-she-goes affair that so many punters want and expect.

In some quarters Mr Clarke is being urged to go for a 4p cut in basic rate tax - 2p now and 2p after the Tories win the election, thus fulfilling the Government's pledge to get down to a basic rate of 20p in the pound.

Mr Clarke's comments, on the eve of his arrival at the IMF meeting in Washington, would appear to rule that out firmly enough. It could, of course, be that his remarks have been taken out of context and should not therefore be read into too deeply.

I would not bet on it. The Chancellor looks intent on leaving a sound fiscal and monetary strategy in place for whoever occupies 11 Downing Street after the next election.

Zeneca's asthma drug cleared in US

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Shares in the big drugs groups soared yesterday on a raft of good news for the industry and strong demand from US investors. Zeneca revealed that its Accolate respiratory drug, said to be the first new asthma treatment for 20 years, had now been cleared by the Food and Drug Administration for use in the US market after an earlier hitch.

Glaxo Wellcome, meantime, hit a new all-time high after its best-selling Zantac ulcer treatment was approved in low-dosage form for sale over the counter in six Continental countries. Sentiment was further boosted by news that drug sales in the world's top 10 markets had grown by 6 per cent to \$70.7bn in the first half of 1996.

US buying on Thursday night spilled over into the London market yesterday. Zeneca was 33p higher at £15.80, helping to reverse some of the previous day's fall, when Bayer of Germany said

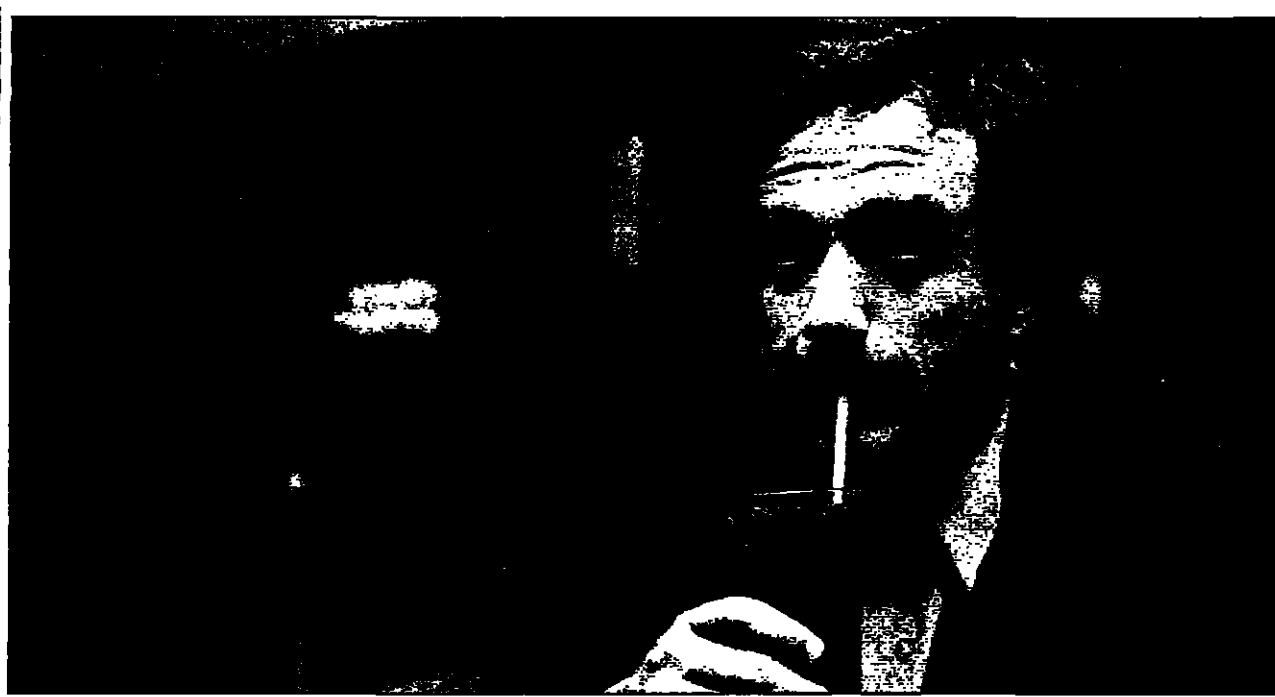
it would not bid for the British group. Glaxo Wellcome leapt to within an ace of £10, ending 18p up at 99.4p and SmithKline Beecham put on 16.5p to 77.1p, after its US pension fund revealed an increased holding.

The FDA approval came as a relief to Zeneca, which suffered a set-back in March when Accolate was rejected by a key advisory committee of the powerful US licensing agency, citing a possible adverse reaction when used with two other drugs.

However, a Zeneca representative in the US said a clinical study of its effects when taken with the allergy drug Seldane was already under way and found no significant problems. Another study, with the blood-thinning drug Coumadin, was conducted after the panel meeting and found a potential effect on bleeding. As a result, doctors and patients will be warned about mixing the two drugs on the Accolate label, the Zeneca spokeswoman said.

Accolate is the first oral drug for asthma, providing long-term prevention, rather than acute treatment, of mild to moderate asthma in children and adults from 12 years old upwards. It is also Zeneca's first drug in this field. Dr Alan Boyd, head of medical research at the group, said it worked by blocking leukotrienes, which stimulate the symptoms of asthma after being triggered by certain stimuli as yet unknown to scientists. As a tablet, Zeneca believes that Accolate represents an advance on existing steroid treatments, given the stigma and difficulties associated with the inhaled devices.

Dr Boyd rejected suggestions from some analysts that Accolate is no more effective than Inal, a long-standing treatment for asthma now off-patent. The US market for the new drug is estimated at around \$1.6bn, but one City estimate suggests that sales are only likely to reach £50m by 1998.



Robert Earl (above), the man behind the Planet Hollywood restaurant chain, has emerged as an investor in Courtyard Leisure, owner of four bars and restaurants in the City of London, writes Nigel Cope.

Earl invests in Punters

Richard Capper, chairman, said Mr Earl would not play a part in the day-to-day running of the company but was welcomed as a shareholder. "We're very happy to have him along."

Mr Earl received a significant windfall last month when Whitbread acquired the Pelican

group, which owns the Café Rouge chain, for £133m. Mr Earl controlled a major stake in the company.

Mr Capper's vehicle, Lomand Investment Holdings, took control of Courtyard in June when it acquired a 29.9 per cent stake. Lomand oper-

ates the Drum & Monkey bar and bistro chain, which is modelled on City gentlemen's clubs with button-backed leather armchairs. "I think he [Mr Earl] liked what we'd done with the Drum & Monkey and so was interested to get involved," Mr Capper said.

Courtyard's four bars, which include Punters in Lime Street, were loss-making last year.

Wickes' mystery continues

NIGEL COPE

Wickes, the troubled DIY group, is set to miss its self-imposed deadline set last month when the board said it would write to shareholders in September explaining how it overstated profits by £50m. It is understood that the new chairman, Michael von Brentano, will not be able to communicate with shareholders until next month.

The company is still in discussions with suppliers over what happened. Legal difficulties over naming who was responsible are adding to the delays.

The board has seen early drafts prepared by Price Waterhouse and the solicitors Linklaters & Paines but wrangles over the wording of the statement has held back publication.

Wickes' shares were suspended in June when details of the accounting irregularities first came to light. The company is facing a possible £30m rights issue before the shares resume trading. This is unlikely to happen before November.

The company is also seeking a new chief executive to replace its executive chairman Henry Sweetbaum, who stepped down in June. John Napier, the former WH Smith finance director, was appointed a non-executive director of Wickes earlier this month. This fuelled speculation that he might take over as non-executive chairman. Bill Hoskins, the former Laporte finance director, has joined Wickes in the finance role.

Wickes is likely to be a takeover target once the holes in its financial position have been secured.

IN BRIEF

- Britain's main banks lent £2.75bn gross to mortgage borrowers in August, up 6 per cent on July, according to the British Bankers' Association. But the BBA said the figures, which are seasonally unadjusted, are further obscured by the inclusion of loans by National & Provincial Building Society, recently taken over by Abbey National. In August 1995, Cheltenham & Gloucester joined the series, also confusing matters. However, including building societies, overall seasonally adjusted lending figures for August are similar to figures for May, the BBA said.
- The US economy grew at a slightly slower pace in the second quarter when the Commerce Department said the rate of growth was 4.7 per cent. This is the second and final revision to the second-quarter data. The first estimate of third-quarter GDP will be released on 30 October. Inflation ran at a 1.8 per cent rate in the second quarter, unchanged from the previous estimate.
- Standard Chartered is merging its investment banking operation into its corporate banking activities which means Gary Southern, head of investment banking, will leave the banking group before year end. The bank is also combining its corporate and institutional banking activities into a group to be headed by David Moir, an executive director. Dave Loretta, chief executive of institutional banking and Mervyn Davies, head of corporate banking, will both report to Mr Moir.
- Twenty former and present members of the Gooda Walker Action Group, which fought for compensation from Lloyd's on behalf of loss-making names, are to share a £600,000 "success fee" for their efforts. The exact amounts to be paid out will be determined by an independent compensation committee. Among those sharing in the success fee is Michael Deeny, chairman of the action group, although no decision has yet been made on how much he will receive.
- Anagen, the fledgling healthcare group, said it has been unable to raise sufficient further capital to continue the search for a marketing partner for its Auraflex system. It is now actively seeking a buyer for all or part of the Anagen (UK) business. The suspension of trading in its shares would continue, it said.
- Deutsche Telekom will publish its flotation prospectus next Friday detailing its economic condition, development plans and its future dividend policy. A consortium of Goldman Sachs, Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank will manage the flotation.
- Japanese August retail sales fell 1.6 per cent year-on-year, an improvement on July when they fell 4.1 per cent year-on-year, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry said.

London Docklands rail extension funded by £165m bond

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

A £165m bond was yesterday issued through BZW, the investment bank, to help fund the £200m Lewisham extension of the Docklands Light Railway in London. Work on the extension started yesterday, immediately after the announcement of the successful bidder.

The contract to run the extension has been won by City

Greenwich Lewisham Rail Link (CGL), a consortium of John Mowlem, Hyder Investments, London Electricity and Mitsui and Co. And in a deal reminiscent of the Channel Tunnel project, the work is to be carried out by LRG contractors, a consortium comprising Mowlem Civil Engineering and M&B Rail Link Construction in a joint venture with Nishimatsu Construction.

The CGL consortium has a 25-year concession to finance,

design, construct and maintain the 4.2 kilometre extension, which will run through two new tunnels under the Thames. There will be seven new stations, although two will replace existing ones, and it will give an estimated 500,000 Londoners access to the combined DLR/Tube network.

Passengers will be charged a premium rate to use the Lewisham extension, above the normal London zonal rates, to

ensure that it generates sufficient funds.

Funding from Greenwich Council has now ensured that the station at Cutty Sark will be built and Lewisham Council will contribute £4.8m towards the cost of the project. The extension will now not be completed until early in the year 2000, a year later than originally envisaged. This will mean that it will be ready for most of the year's Millennium celebrations

at Greenwich, although it will be finished too late for the big party expected for 31 December 1999.

The 24-year bond issue is being launched by BZW, whose staff are moving shortly to Canary Wharf, which is on the DLR. BZW said last night that there had been a good demand for the bonds which were priced on a yield of 9.35 per cent, 1.3 per cent above the comparable gilt-edged stock.

Building market not as safe as houses

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Just what is going on in the housing and related construction markets? Barely a day goes by without a new report suggesting UK house prices are accelerating. The latest, from broker UBS, predicts an average increase of 10 per cent next year. Yet, with one or two notable exceptions, house-builders and building materials producers see little or no sign of the elusive feel-good factor returning their markets.

One reason is that while house prices have clearly moved ahead, especially in London and the South-east, new homes are not being built. In the first half, UK housing starts fell by 11 per cent and completions dropped by 10 per cent. Faced with such a shortfall in domestic volumes, even building materials producers such as Hepworth, with a strong export profile, are running hard just to stand still.

Barratt Developments, never slow to speak its mind, knows who to blame. Britain's second-biggest housebuilder this week attacked the failure of the Government's planning policy, with 90 per cent of local authorities missing their targets for dealing with planning applications.

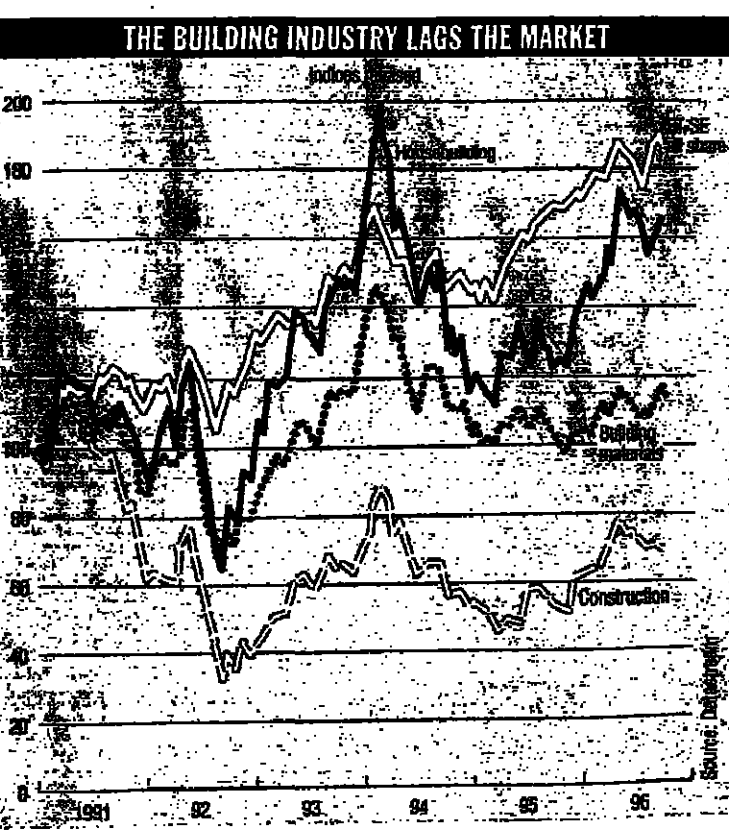
The result, Barratt fears, is a shortage of development land and increased pressure on land prices.

Housebuilders are not standing idly by. Rapid consolidation in this highly fragmented sector, which began in earnest three years ago, has gained momentum in the past 12 months with 23 deals completed, ranging in value from £6m to £320m.

More will follow as the big players become truly national operators, squeezing out the smaller local housebuilders. Barratt this week reiterated its goal of building 11,000 houses per annum by 2000 through organic growth outside its core South-east region. Wimpey, the biggest housebuilder, which recently gained

Tarmac's housing arm, has a 12,000-a-year target. In volume terms, these structural changes are having a profoundly negative impact on builders' margins as demand from small, local jobs dries up.

For building materials groups, the patchy state of the UK housing market would matter less if their aggregate activities were pre-occupied with major infrastructure projects or



benefiting from better European markets. Neither is the case.

The UK roads programme is being cut to ribbons, paring contractors' margins to the bone, while everyone apart from Tarmac is bad-mouthing the Government's Private Finance Initiative for its administrative delays and funding problems.

On the Continent, the outlook is just as poor, especially in Germany.

But the overall German construction market is set to decline this year for the first time since the Berlin Wall came down and it will almost certainly contract again in 1997. The same goes for France and any other country that is politically serious about signing up for a single European currency.

Faced with such dire market conditions, British companies might think cost-cutting offers a quick fix. But apart from the horrendous expense involved in making our European neighbours redundant, the likes of Redland, RMC and BPC Industries still find themselves producing tiles, concrete or plasterboard in high-wage, hard-currency countries.

All of which makes stock-picking a highly selective exercise. Among housebuilders, Berkeley's track record of unbroken earnings growth through thick and thin is still worth backing.

Elsewhere, Taylor Woodrow's exposure to growth markets in the Far East makes it the pick of the contractors, but builders' merchants, aggregates suppliers and other building materials groups are best avoided.

Apart from RMC, the building materials sector would have investors believe that the bad winter weather which decimated the first-half profits was an act of God and that the underlying situation is improving.

For a start, profits last year of £2.87m gave Shire a blue-chip image in a sea of mainly loss-making rivals. Admittedly the surplus, which replaced a loss of £7.05m last time, was mainly due to a maiden £1.88m contribution from Imperial Pharmaceutical Services (now renamed Shire Pharmaceutical Contracts), acquired a year ago.

But with 26 products on the market, Shire has a decent conventional drugs business ranging from migraine treatments to osteoporosis therapies, where it has half the UK market. That lot chipped in a solid 30 per cent rise in sales to £8.96m in the year to June.

Less predictable is the £11.7m from licensing and development fees, which soared from £210,000 last year. The figures were swollen by an £8.2m payment from Johnson & Johnson subsidiary Janssen, which is paying for the development of Galanthamine (to be branded as Reminyl) in exchange for marketing rights. Some £4.8m of that figure was non-recurring and this sort of income will always be lumpy.

Thus far, Galanthamine is showing promising results in treating Alzheimer's disease, which could be a £2bn market by 2000.

But the unique selling proposition behind Shire is that the financing of its development portfolio is completely underwritten, either by third parties or its own sales. That leaves £25.4m of net cash free for acquisitions, of which two under discussion could account for half, and the purchase of drugs or projects from others.

Even with only a break-even result in prospect this year, Shire presents a low-risk way into the sector. The shares, up 3.5p to 190p, capitalise the group at £116m and look better value than many rivals.

COMPANY RESULTS				
Company	Revenue £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Cheltenham & Gloucester (CGL)	156m (13.2m)	2.8m (1.6m)	-	-
Cheltenham & Gloucester (CGL) (p)	68.3m (55.8m)	2.4m (5.3m)	1.7p (7.1p)	3p (8p)
Glaxo Group (G)	9.58m (4.42m)	0.28m (2.27m)	0.75p (8.9p)	0.75p (8.75p)
Glaxo (G)	92.1m (44.2m)	0.33m (3.58m)	1.5p (1.45p)	0.84p (8.52p)
Hepworth (H)	268m (377m)	35.5m (37.5m)	9.8p (10.5p)	5.5p (5.5p)
Joseph Holt (JH)	14.7m (14.4m)	4.15m (4.15m)	81.32p (81.08p)	1.3p (1.3p)
Joseph Holt (JH) (p)	9.75m (9.75m)	1.02m (1.00m)	2.40p (2.40p)	1.3p (1.3p)
International Energy (IE)	38.8m (41.8m)	3.8m (2.85m)	5.51p (5.64p)	1.45p (1.4p)
Laporte Group (L)	101m (105m)	2.84m (1.23m)	15.65p (15.07p)	13p (13p)
Northbrook Properties (NP)	-	-	0.85m (0.01m)	-
Shire Pharmaceuticals (S)	21.0m (5.10m)	2.9m (1.70m)	5.5p (32.5p)	-
Specialist Range (SR)	2.47m (2.63m)	0.23m (0.22m)	1p (1p)	0.8p (0.8p)
Specialist Range (SR) (p)	74.8m (73.9m)	4.1m (3.4p)	5.7p (5.4p)	2.4p (-)
Wimpey (W)	159m (164m)	1.72m (0.62m)	2.58p (1.70p)	1p (1p)
Wimpey (W) (p)	45.2m (34.5m)	2.6m (2.0m)	1p (0.7p)	0.15p (0.1p)

(p) - current figures

market report / shares

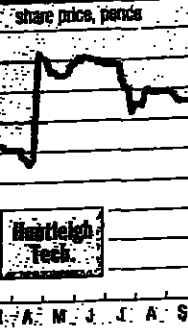
Footsie gets high on heady mix of drugs and oils

TAKING STOCK

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3946.4 +13.2
FT-SE 250
4406.2 +1.3
FT-SE 350
1068.4 +5.4
SEAO VOLUME
626m shares,
35,131 bargains
Gilts Index
77.9

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



An unlikely combination - drugs and oils - led the stock market higher.

Pharmaceuticals were encouraged by further evidence the world is becoming even more hooked on drugs and oils scored from the latest unrest in the Middle East.

The net result was the FT-SE 100 index managed to strike a 13.2 points gain to 3946.4. It would probably have closed higher if New York had not made an indifferent opening.

Drugs were on a high following the disclosure the value of prescriptions in the world's 10 largest markets had risen by 6 per cent in the first half of the year.

Glaxo Wellcome, additionally buoyed by further clearance for Zantac, gained 18p to 994p, and Zeneca, helped by the long-awaited US clearance for its Accolate asthma drug, jumped 33p to 1.580p.

SmithKline Beecham rose 16.5p to 771p and Medeva 4.5p to 252p.

On the oil pitch British Petroleum jumped 6.5p to 654.5p and Shell 6.5p to 978.5p. Enterprise Oil, with reserve upgrades going the rounds, fared 15p to 533p and Lamsco added 5p to 218.5p.

Throughout the day trading remained subdued. Institutions indulged in a little window dressing, attempting to put a touch of gloss on their third-quarter performance but there was little sign of any genuine investment interest.

RTZ, the mining group, put on 30p to 977.5p on the firmer copper price and P&O, despite the not surprising Office of Fair Trading interest in its Nedlloyd liaison, rose 15p to 618p.

TI Group, thought to be contemplating a bid for Senior Engineering, eased 9.5p to 572p. Senior firmed to 116.5p.



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

BTG romped ahead 212.5p to 2,362.5p as excitement continued to grow about its catalogue of inventions.

Matthew Clark, the hard pressed cider group, had another eventful session. At one time the shares were down 29p but, by the close, they were showing a 12p uplift to 318.5p.

Kwik Save, the food discount, had no such luck. With Barclays de Zoete Wedd and NatWest Securities adding their voices to the sell chorus the shares fell a further 3.5p to 309p.

NatWest's Tony MacNeary thinks a restructuring is imminent. He says the uncertainty it creates together an expected

25 per cent dividend cut make the shares a sell.

House of Fraser, the department store chain, gained 4.5p on talk of a bid, probably from Burton. Yorkshire-Tyres TV put on 15p to 1,175p, awaiting the expected Granada bid.

Contra Consulting, a recruitment group, firmed to 57p. Scottish Television sold its 27.5p per cent stake at 52p through stockbroker Collins Stewart to institutions.

Courtyard Leisure, the London wine bar chain, jumped 6.5p to 19.75p following the arrival of restaurateur Robert Earl with a 3.25 per cent interest.

Lopez, the media group, gained 2.5p to 25.5p; there are suggestions of a link with Birkdale, unchanged at 7p.

Huntleigh slumped 122.5p to 640p, a two-day fall of 237.5p. The healthcare group is the latest example of the market's unrelenting approach to high flyers which fail to meet expectations.

On Thursday the group, with an outstanding record, announced a reasonable set of figures but not as good as the market had anticipated. Even a bonus issue and a move from USM to full listing failed to cushion the blow.

Aminex, with oil interests in the former Soviet Union, was firm at 55p. The shareholders meeting to approve the involvement of the World Bank will be called next week.

Once the World Bank deal, involving a 20 per cent stake and a near £20m loan, is cleared Aminex is likely to

sharply increase its oil operations.

Shalibane, making products for the motor industry, drove on to AIM, touching 137.5p against a 125p placing.

Sound system group Verity boomed 7.5p to 23.75p following a 31 per cent interim profits gain and the development of a new loudspeaker technology, named NXT.

It has created a company to handle NXT with outside shareholders taking up some of the capital at a price implying an £18m valuation.

Goodwin, a little foundry business, held at 60.5p. The shares are likely to move higher on Monday. The company reported a surprise 800 per cent profit advance to just over £2m. Shareholders get a special "loyalty" dividend, making a 17.94p total against 0.655p. The shares have climbed from 33p since March.

Castle Mill International, nudging 100p before the 1987 crash, is at last on the verge of completing its protracted restructuring. Two banks have agreed to slash the amount due from £4.1m to £725,000 and CMI is raising £2m through a placing and open offer at 2.5p.

The company, although getting back into profit last year, has been struggling against a debt mountain, incurred through over expansion, since 1991.

Once the restructuring is through CMI, a textile business, is likely to seek acquisitions. The shares rose 0.5p to 3.25p.

Deltion Electronics, an electrical components supplier, should make a bright market debut on Monday. The shares were placed at 150p and an opening price of around 165p is likely.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: x Ex-dividend on Ex-UK Unlisted Securities Market's Suspended (or Partly Paid) on NI Paid Shares. + AIM Stock. Source: FT Information

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from Seag. Simply dial 0891 123 333, followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 1233 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

FT-SE 100 - Real-time	00	Starting Rates	04	Privatisation Issues	36
UK Stock Market Report	01	Bullion Report	05	Water Shares	39
UK Company News	02	Mail 50 Report	06	Electricity Shares	40
Foreign Exchanges	03	Tokyo Market	21	High Street Banks	41

Anyone with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of The Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, phone 0891 123 333. For assistance, call our helpline 071 873 4375 (9.30am-5.30pm).

Call cost 35p per minute (cheap rates), and 40p at all other times. Call charges include VAT.

Bank	Share	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Bank of Scotland	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Barclays Bank	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
HSBC Bank	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
London & Lancashire	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
NatWest Bank	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Paragon Bank	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Prudential	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Royal Bank of Scotland	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Santander	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
TSB Bank	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Yorkshire Bank	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Ireland	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Cyprus	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Greece	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Italy	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Japan	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Korea	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Spain	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Sweden	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Switzerland	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Taiwan	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of Thailand	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Netherlands	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the United Kingdom	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the United States	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the West	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the World	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the East	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the South	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the North	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Middle	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the West Indies	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Caribbean	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Pacific	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Atlantic	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Indian Ocean	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Arctic	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Antarctic	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Equator	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Tropics	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Desert	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Mountains	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Plains	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Valleys	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Hills	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Forests	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Fields	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Meadows	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Pastures	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Farms	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Villages	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Towns	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
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Bank of the Democracies	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Monarchies	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00
Bank of the Sultanates	100	100.00	0.00	5.00	10.00

ASCOT'S FESTIVAL OF RACING: : The meeting's highlight rekindles old rivalry but the French raider may devour both protagonists

Late thrust decisive for Ashkalani

RICHARD EDMONDSON

Twelve months ago this week Sheikh Mohammed shepherded a bunch of nervous pressmen into a private Ascot chalet and instructed that the coffee should be poured. As the fine bone china cups rattled in their saucers Dubai's crown prince announced that one of racing's greatest alliances was virtually over as he had lost his patience with Henry Cecil.

The precise reason why this fissure developed is no clearer now than it was that day. There are theories. Sheikh Mohammed certainly considered Cecil was getting a little too big for his tasselled boots and that his wife, Natalie, was straying from his idea of how a trainer's wife should behave (ie smile sweetly and occasionally flick a duster over the Welsh dresser).

One proposition was that the Arab had taken business-ending umbrage at the discovery that Cecil had not been forthright about an injury to Mark Of Esteem.



Sheikh Mohammed: vexed

Cecil at the head of the trainees' championship.

Of today's seven runners (an annoying number for a race which could have presented good each-way possibilities) only Charmwood Forest, like Mark Of Esteem formerly trained by Cecil but now carrying Godolphin's striking blue livery.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Ashkalani
ASCOT 3.20
NB: Russian Music
(Ascot 3.55)

cry, has failed to win a Group One event over a mile this year.

The other domestic classic winner in the field is Cecil's Bosra Sham, who has been in dry dock ever since she damaged a hoof in winning the 1,000 Guineas. It is the Newmarket trainer's great good fortune that he has surrounded himself with owners apart from Sheikh Mohammed who are not short of a bob or two. Bosra Sham is the property of Waheed Said, who

forked out 530,000gms at Park Paddocks two years ago to secure the filly. That money now looks well spent, though there is the suggestion that Bosra Sham may have left her career behind in the race that made it.

For those who like to settle back on the sofa and bathe in their own cleverness about having secured the value option, there is only one alternative. Bijou D'Inde has closely linked form with both Mark Of Esteem and the French challenger, Ashkalani, yet he remains a much larger price than either.

As Johnson has already won a Classic it is unworthy for people to look down on him and it is not a bias he much enjoys. "I thought we'd got over all that prejudice by now, but it's every body else's problem and not mine," the Middleham trainer

said yesterday. "I think Bijou D'Inde's price is insulting. If the horse runs up to his Ascot form [when he beat Ashkalani] he's got to just about win it."

"Having said that I'm not as confident as I'd like to be, but that's got nothing to do with the opposition. The problem is getting the horse there in the same condition that I had him at Ascot. The ground on the gallops is rock hard so we haven't really let him down on it and I don't know if his form at home is quite as good as in mid-summer."

If Bijou D'Inde then is hardly surfing into the Group One race on a tide of high expectation, the same cannot be said for the protagonist who arrives for work from over the Channel.

ASHKALANI (nap 3.20) is assessed to be in the form of his life by Alain de Royer Dupré, who, for all his outstanding successes on the Continent, has yet to post a winner in Britain.

Cecil: other wealthy owners

The trainer must have thought that statistic was going to be left behind in the St James's Palace Stakes at the Royal meeting, when his chestnut swept into the lead a furlong out. But while de Royer Dupré's topper was in the air his runner was clawed back by Bijou D'Inde.

Michael Kinane was blamed (a trifle unfairly) for making his challenge too early that day, though it has to be said that Ashkalani looks a much more potent performer when produced in the dying moments. His last effort was stunningly persuasive as Gerard Mosses, this afternoon's pilot, cut down talented rivals in the Prix du Moulin in

3.20	QUEEN ELIZABETH II STAKES (CLASS A) (Group 1) £250,000 1m Penalty Value £199,020	BBC1
1	26-2124 CHARMWOOD FOREST (4y) (GB) (Buckley) Sued in Suro 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224	
2	35-1112 FIRST LADY (5y) (GB) (Buckley) G 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224	
3	26-2125 BOSSA SHAM (4y) (GB) (Buckley) G 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224	
4	11-1121 ASHKALANI (5y) (FR) (Royer Dupré) H 3.8 11 1 R 1000 5.224	
5	5-3423 BILLY D'INDE (5y) (GB) (Royer Dupré) H 3.8 11 1 R 1000 5.224	
6	21-1011 MARK OF ESTEEM (5y) (GB) (Royer Dupré) H 3.8 11 1 R 1000 5.224	
7	11-1111 BOSSA SHAM (4y) (GB) (Buckley) G 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224	

manoeuvre that was close to insolence. Ashkalani has better foci to deal with today, but the reputation and record he brings from France is so awesome that he must be the selection.

Queen Elizabeth II Stakes - Ascot 3.20				
Horse (Trainer)	Conc	William Hill	Laurelton	Total
Ashkalani (A de Royer-Dupré)	5-2	5-2	11-4	9-4
Bosra Sham (H Cecil)	11-4	5-2	5-2	11-4
Mark Of Esteem (Suey Suro)	9-4	5-2	5-2	11-4
First Lady (H Cecil)	9-4	5-2	5-2	11-4
Billy D'Inde (H Cecil)	9-4	5-2	5-2	11-4
Charmwood Forest (Suey Suro)	11-4	5-2	5-2	11-4
Suey Suro (H Cecil)	11-4	5-2	5-2	11-4

Each-way a fifth of the odds, places 1, 2, 3

QUEEN ELIZABETH II STAKES - 10 YEAR-TALE											
Winners of the following:	1986-87	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98
Pat's of the Americas	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2
William's place in history:	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2
William's place:	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2
Profit or loss to Q2 stake:	141-14	141-14	141-14	141-14	141-14	141-14	141-14	141-14	141-14	141-14	141-14
Percentage of winners placed 2nd, 3rd and 4th in last year 50%											
Shortest official winner: Sals Regis 5-1 (1986)											
Longest placed winner: Murren 14-1 (1984)											
Top trainers: J. Dwyer (2) - 1986, 1987 & 1988 (1985)											
M. Sirois (2) - 1989 & 1990 (1989 & 1990)											
Top jockeys: P. Taylor Ch. - 1986 & 1987 (1986 & 1987)											

Diadem Stakes - Ascot 2.35				
Horse (Trainer)	Conc	William Hill	Laurelton	Total
Lucayan Prince (D Loder)	5-2	5-2	5-2	5-2
Charmwood Forest (Suey Suro)	7-1	6-1	6-1	13-2
Mark Of Esteem (Suey Suro)	9-4	7-1	5-1	13-2
First Lady (H Cecil)	10-1	10-1	10-1	10-1
Billy D'Inde (H Cecil)	11-2	10-1	8-1	8-1
Chari Jezz (C Britton)	10-1	10-1	11-4	11-4
Charmwood Forest (Suey Suro)	10-1	10-1	11-4	9-1
Wildwest (Suey Suro)	10-1	10-1	10-1	12-1
Leap For Joy (J Gosden)	12-1	11-1	16-1	11-1
Watch Me (R Harmon)	16-1	16-1	14-1	14-1
Lucky Loozer (R Harmon)	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Awert (W Muir)	25-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Silver Paradise (C Britton)	55-1	100-1	65-1	65-1

Each-way a fifth the odds, places 1, 2, 3

Festival Handicap - Ascot 3.55				
Horse (Trainer/weight)	Conc	William Hill	Laurelton	Total
High Summer (J Cranford/8st1lb)	7-2	3-1	4-1	100-30
Prince Eddard (J Banks/8st)	8-4	7-1	7-1	7-1
Decorated Nema (J Goddard/8st3lb)	3-1	10-1	12-1	11-1
Conquest (G Hammonds/8st9lb)	12-1	14-1	12-1	14-1
Hi Netford (G Hammonds/8st9lb)	14-1	14-1	12-1	14-1
Jewelled (Ry Hammonds/8st9lb)	14-1	14-1	14-1	14-1
Princess (Ry Hammonds/8st9lb)	14-1	14-1	14-1	14-1
Light Sails (G Hammonds/8st9lb)	14-1	14-1	11-1	14-1
Prince Leon (J Lyons/8st9lb)	20-1	20-1	14-1	20-1
Princess (Ry Hammonds/8st9lb)	14-1	20-1	14-1	14-1
Princess (Ry Hammonds/8st9lb)	14-1	20-1	14-1	14-1
Princess (Ry Hammonds/8st9lb)	14-1	20-1	14-1	14-1
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Each-way a quarter the odds, places 1, 2, 3, 4



The Sporting Life

RETURN: 5-1 Lucayan Prince, 5-1 Charmwood Forest, 5-1 Bosra Sham, 5-1 Mark Of Esteem, 5-1 Billy D'Inde, 5-1 Charmwood Forest, 5-1 Suey Suro.

1996: Cool Jazz 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224

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ASCOT

2.06: The Godolphin pair, **Kaleba** and **WALL STREET**, may dominate. The former's best form came over this track and trip behind the tire last year, while the fast-improving selection holds **Salmon Ladder** on Newbury form this summer. Stepping up to this trip for the first time, he can improve again.

WINDSOR

2.06: **WINDSOR** is the best of the three. He has been in good form since his last start, and he has a good chance of winning. **WINDSOR** is the best of the three. He has been in good form since his last start, and he has a good chance of winning.

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WINDSOR

2.35: LUCAYAN PRINCE is well

driven in stall one and can add to his 100% success in the Jersey Stakes at the Royal meeting. The fact that he needs to be held up for a late run precludes confidence and Royale Figurine, another low-drawn horse in form, should not be discounted.

0.00

2.55: MARK OF ESTERNE, the

1,000-guinea winner, returned to form in spectacular style at Goodwood last time and is just preferred to the French 2,000 winner,

conceded fill to Bishop Of Casbel, was confirmed when the runner-up went in at Doncaster. Ashlandian also paid well at the 1,000-guinea sale. Prix de Moulin, and his defeat by Bijou D'Inde here can be attributed to hitting the front too soon.

0.00

3.55: BIGGER SUMMER, who incurs

just a 5lb penalty for winning a Salisbury handicap by six lengths before running My Branch to 1/4 odds, is a 100% winner at the 1,000-guinea sale. He is the favourite at the Doncaster St Leger meeting since the publication of the weights for this race, will be a massive 15lb

<p>Ashtakani. The form of the Good- worse off in future handicaps.</p>	
<p>ASCOT</p>	
<p>HYPERION</p>	
<p>2.00 Wall Street (nb) 2.35 Lucayan Prince 2.30 MARK OF ESTEEM (nap) 3.55 High Summer</p>	<p>4.30 Fatefully 5.00 Corsini 5.35 Northern Fleet</p>
<p>GORG: Good to Firm (Good in places). STALLS: Straight course - stands side; round course - inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: None. High-class course with testing uphill finish. Big Course is near junction of A303 and A301. Access from M5 (Junc 3) and M4 (Junc 6). Helicopter-landing facility at course. Railway station (services from London, Watford) ad- jacent course. ADMISSION: Members £20 (Junior Members 16-35 years, half price); Ground- stand & Pudlock £18; Silver Ring £5. GAR PAGES: No's 1, 2 & 3 & 4, remainder free.</p>	

■ LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: J. Dunlop — 26 winners from 138 runners gets a success ratio of 19.1% and a profit to a £1 level stake of £71.06; J. Gosden — 20 winners, 125 runners, 15.9%, £24.00; D. Eganzone — 20 winners, 1533 runners, 8.09%, £15.40; M. Stoute — 19 winners, 1000 runners, 10.0%, £55.18.

■ LEADING JOCKEYS: Pat Eddowes — 24 winners, 249 rides, 14.1%, £112.20; W. Carson — 32 winners, 236 rides, 13.5%, -847.50; S. Quinn — 21 winners, 158 rides, 14.4%, £60.90; D. Chestert — 27 winners, 216 rides, 12.9%, -85.81.

WINNERS FIRST TIME: None.

WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: Darken (5.36) won at age six last Saturday.

WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: Emerydale (5.35) has won 255 times by F. Barber from Harlow, Cambridgeshire.

OWNERS AND LOCAL CLUBS (IN ASC ALLIANCE)

2.00	35 EQUINOX 1m 40 of Personality Value £31,400					6/20/25
0-12-1221	KILNARD (5y) (GB) (Buckley) Sued in Suro 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224					
0-12-1222	KILNARD (5y) (GB) (Buckley) Sued in Suro 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224					
0-12-1223	KILNARD (5y) (GB) (Buckley) Sued in Suro 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224					
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0-12-1233	KILNARD (5y) (GB) (Buckley) Sued in Suro 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224					
0-12-1234	KILNARD (5y) (GB) (Buckley) Sued in Suro 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224					
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0-12-1367	KILNARD (5y) (GB) (Buckley) Sued in Suro 4.9 1M 1 R 1000 5.224	</				

<p>ROYAL COURT was not upset by the steady gallop when he lost his unborn tag in Year's Best Vagabond Stakes (Group Two), but the form has obvious merit with the first two, second and fourth place horses, all of whom have won Group races, including the Epsom Top, winning race last year. The fourth, Harman, was put in his place when taking on Sweden and Wall Street at Goodwood two weeks ago, but the prospect of a good place here for a third time is a very attractive one. The last two winners, too, have had some doubts of Shantou (Haywood) and Juvah (Chepstead). Even if Shantou was not at the best that she's got, the fact is that he has won at St Leger, while Juvah is a leading Consistent Performer in the last two years.</p> <p>LAURELTON is a very good horse, but he has not been in the best of form since his lead at Newbury in July. There is a slight question mark on whether Wall Street will like a mile and a half, but he has been in good form, and he has won at this distance. He is a real race horse, especially with St Leger 1500, his stamina looking a somewhat tricky commodity. Kelsoe comes the Goodolph second colosse.</p>	<p>Selected ROYAL COURT</p>
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2.35		575,000 added & Penalty Value £58,550		RACE 5	
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1	820121	BARBARA BRESNAN (GB) (Mr Alan W & M Knight) K Black 5 9.1	R Hughes	5.224	1000
2	400380	AUREO (GB) (P J Dwyer) H Muro 5 9.0	P J Dwyer	5.107	1000
3	000400	KOOL_WOZZ (GB) (S)			

-33 continued-				
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sport

Instead of disappearing into the lower divisions or on to television when he stepped down as England manager, Bobby Robson has carved out a hugely successful career in Europe. He talked to **Glenn Moore** in Barcelona

The man with the world at his feet

Bobby Robson can be forgiven a moment of wishfulness when news of Glenn Hoddle's latest England squad filtered through to Spain this week. Poland, next week's Wembley opponents, evoke a memory or two for Robson. England's 3-0 win over the Poles in the 1986 Mexico World Cup probably saved his job as England manager. A hard-earned draw in Katowice three years later won England a place in Italia '90 and the subsequent painful glory of a semi-final exit on penalties.

Robson still regards his time as England manager as the highlight of a life in football, but although the memories would have come flooding back, he would not have dwelt on them long. The 63-year-old is no sun-seeking Brit in retirement on the Spanish costas. Barely a year after surgery for cancer, he is the manager of the biggest club in the world.

Barcelona may have only won one European Cup, but they are bigger than Manchester United or Juventus, bigger even than their hated rivals, Real Madrid. They have their own bank, the Pope is a member of

The Bobby Robson file

Born: 28 Feb 1933, Co Durham.
Played: Fulham and West Bromwich Albion.
England caps: 20 (played in 1958 and 1962 World Cups).
Management career: Fulham (1968), Ipswich (1969-1982), England (1982-90), PSV Eindhoven (1990-92), Sporting Lisbon (1992-93), Porto (1994-96), Barcelona (1996-).

Honours: World Cup semi-finals (1990), quarter-finals (1986), UEFA Cup (1981), FA Cup (1978), Dutch title (1990/91, 1991/92), Portuguese title (1994/95, 1995/96), Portuguese cup (1994).

the fan club, and the demand to watch them exceeds even the 115,000 capacity of the cavernous Nou Camp – a veritable amphitheatre of dreams. They are not so much a team as an expression of Catalan nationalism.

"It is a colossal job," Robson said earlier this week. "It is a great challenge, a great opportunity, I'm really enjoying it. It is a pressure-cooker, but I am used to that. I can handle that. If I get results, it will be more than pleasurable. If I don't, well it isn't pleasurable anywhere if you don't. That's the same the world over."

Maybe, but the extra element in Barcelona is the club's role in the community. Catalonia has long regarded itself as an separate country yet, for more than 30 years under Franco's dictatorship, football was the only way they could express their independence. Even now the club – almost alone in football – refuses to sully its famous magenta and blue shirts with a sponsor's name.

"The job had to go to an experienced coach," Robson said. "I do not think a young coach could handle it here. It doesn't frighten me, that's the thing. If I had, I would not have taken it. I am experienced, I've been around the world. I've had my own successes."



Under orders: Bobby Robson leaves Ronaldo, the Barcelona and Brazil striker, in no doubt as to what he wants him to do on the pitch

Photograph: Albert Olive/EFE

He has indeed. Robson is probably English football's most successful export. Since leaving England after Italia '90 he has won four championships, two Dutch and two Portuguese. He moved across the Iberian peninsula from Porto this summer to replace Johan Cruyff. So far he has taken the team to the top of the Liga, to the second round of the European Cup-Winners' Cup and defeated last year's Double winners, Atletico Madrid, in the SuperCopa (Spain's Charity Shield). All this while integrating eight new players and a changed playing style.

Yet expectations are so high there are still a few complaints. As a

Geordie, Robson knows all about passionate supporters, as a former England manager he knows all about a critical press. But even he has been

taken aback by the intensity of both. When he spoke, he had just come out of a press conference and said: "Some of the questions are quite remarkable considering we are top of the league."

At least they are football questions. For much of his reign as England manager, Robson was cruelly vilified in the tabloid press and his last year in the job was marred by lurid exposure of his personal life. "The media here is only football-orientated. It sticks to the industry," he said. It is the only time in our conversation that he speaks with real vehemence. Most of the time his baritone voice crackles with the enthusiasm which has hallmarked his career.

Other distinguishing features are decency and occasional scattiness. The

tale is often told of his meeting Bryan Robson during an England trip. "Hello Bobby," said Bobby. "No," Bryan said. "You're Bobby, I'm Bryan."

He remains unaffected by the trappings of fame, even choosing a small residence set back from the sea rather than a grand house on the front because he did not want people to think he was showing off.

"Local reaction has been very good," Robson said. "I am following Johan [Cruyff], who had been here a long time and had a lot of success. But for the last two years they won nothing, so that makes it a little easier, although I suppose if he had won the championship for the last two years he would still be here."

"Johan preferred a sweeper and two markers. I have dislodged that. I'm playing with a flat back four, two

players wide – I like width – and two box-to-box midfielders. I've bought Ronaldo to play up front and I play with one behind him. Johan never played that way."

Good players, of course, can adapt and Robson has more good players than most. He inherited George Popescu, Luis Figo and a clutch of Spanish internationals. This summer Barcelona signed Ronaldo for £13m from PSV, another Brazilian, Giovanni, returning hero Hristo Stolev, Laurent Blanc – the man keeping Chelsea's Franck Leboeuf out of the French team – Victor Baia, Portugal's goalkeeper, and Fernando Couto. They also bought Luis Enrique and Juan Antonio Pizzi on the domestic market. Total cost: £28m.

There is no way Robson can play all his 19 internationals at once. "It

is not easy. I have a squad of 25 and they are all good. But they are used to this situation, they grew up with it. They don't mean, they don't ask for a transfer. They are happy to wait their turn. I don't have the problems I would have in England."

Barcelona's investment was part of a total of £130m pre-season spending by Liga teams, £25m more than the Premiership. "The world is the club's oyster," Robson said. "The Bosman ruling helps, but it does mean you have to commit to players – Ronaldo and Baia have signed for eight years."

"I leave all that [negotiations concerning transfers and contracts] to the directors and I don't miss it. My job is working with players every day, coming in and being on the training field."

This is the same division of responsibility that Arsenal are attempting, and Robson said of Arsene Wenger, the new manager at High-bury: "He is a good fellow, I know him quite well. He is very intelligent. I think he will do all right if he does not have to get involved in all those things like buying toilet rolls and so on."

What does he miss? "My family. I have three grandchildren and one on the way. I never thought I'd stay abroad – I went to Holland for two years and thought I would come back. I like it. I like the life, I like the job, just working with the team. I keep in touch with England, but I don't have time to miss things."

He is, though, eager to hear the latest results and gossip, asking first about Newcastle. Intrigued, too, at the thought of Ipswich and Fulham, the two English clubs he managed, meeting in the Coca-Cola Cup. Robson is the second ex-Fulham manager to coach Barcelona. Vic Buckingham was the first. Robson struggled when he succeeded him at Craven Cottage in 1968 and was sacked after 10 months. But for Ipswich, one of England's best managerial careers may have been stymied at birth.

Barcelona's international players

Spain: Abaitua, Amor, Quirós, Sergi, Quirós, De la Peña, Ferrer, Nadal, Pizzi, Luis Enrique, Beldarrain.
Portugal: Victor Baia, Fernando Couto, Rigo.
Brazil: Ronaldo, Giovanni.
Romania: Popescu.
France: Blanc.
Bulgaria: Stolev.

Robson may be over for England's match next Wednesday. Of Glenn Hoddle, he said: "He is very studious, he has a football brain. If he can handle it, he will do well. I will never forget my England experience. You can't go any higher than that. It was marvellous."

Well, most of it. Ask him how he felt watching the penalty shoot-out with Germany this summer and his face drops to a whisp. "Boignant? Absolutely. I could not believe how history repeated itself, an absolute replica. Just what happened to me in 1990. I felt for Terry [Venables]. I felt it was inevitable that it would go to penalties, but I did not think we would lose – but they never miss."

Robson's voice is now so quiet I can hardly hear him. It feels like intruding on a private grief. But he keeps it in perspective, and did so even before last year's brush with death when he needed an operation for a cancerous growth on his left cheekbone.

It might have pushed some men into retirement, but Robson concluded: "My gut reaction is to keep going. I thrive on it. My health is fine. The prognosis is excellent. I am very much in love with it – I am immersed in football."

No 155 Barnet

A warm, comforting feeling flowed inside me when it was announced, only days before the start of the season, that Ray Clemence had vacated the manager's position at Barnet in order to assume the role of goalkeeping coach in Glenn Hoddle's new England set-up. Not that the sensation was brought on by pride at seeing Barnet's first graduate to England international duty; or even by malicious satisfaction at hearing of Clemence's departure. After all, he had inherited arguably the worst team ever to grace the Football League, seen them relegated by 25 points, and subsequently transformed the club into strong candidates for promotion from the Third Division.

It was just that Barnet somehow felt like Barnet again. After two and a half years of relative stability, there was a good old-fashioned crisis to bring memories of the halcyon Fry/Flashman era, with its innumerable sackings and wind-up orders, flooding back. The sweet stench of turmoil seemed to be filling the air around Underhill once again, and boy it felt good to be back.

To add to the drama, a swift glance at football's unemployed list briefly sparked excited mutterings about a possible replacement for Clemence. Surely George Graham would relish the opportunity to begin his managerial recuperation at Barnet, less than 10 miles from his London home. Perhaps Johan Cruyff, freshly sacked by Barcelona, was in fact visiting England in order to hold secret talks with the Barnet chairman, Tony Kleinhous.

Alas, no Kleinhous instead promoted Clemence's No 2, Terry Bullivant, a "veteran" of over 150 games with Fulham, Aston Villa, Charlton and Brentford. Bullivant has made

a promising start to his first managerial job, typified by the narrow 1-0 defeat at West Ham in the Coca-Cola Cup last week. He has a number of talented players in his squad, among them tenacious midfielder Phil "OJ" Simpson, pony-tailed striker Sean Devine and goalkeeper Maik Taylor. Bullivant has even smashed the club's transfer record to bring Cyprus international Costas Costinou to Underhill for £60,000.

Promotion is unquestionably within the team's grasp, provided they complement a mean defence, which has conceded only four League goals this season, by scoring more regularly.

Although Devine has worked manfully as a lone forward, Barnet's striking options have been hampered by a bizarre injury to Lee Hodges, scorer of 18 goals last season. Hodges' brief appearance as a substitute at Upton Park on Wednesday was his first since suffering a groin injury when he slipped in the shower while on holiday over the summer. Such farcical episodes are, of course, not wholly uncommon at Barnet given the club's penchant for the perverse and unexpected. Several seasons ago, when the Bees were battling for promotion from the GM Vauxhall Conference, central defender Darren Angell was sidelined after falling down a manhole.

Barring any other unfortunate slips, Barnet fans can look forward to the remainder of the season with more optimism than for several years. Once we have endured the traditional FA Cup first-round defeat by Woking (our conquerors in each of the last two seasons) we can concentrate solely on the League, safe in the knowledge that the next crisis is just around the corner. But then again, Barnet just wouldn't be the same any other way.

MAJOR WEEKEND FOOTBALL FIXTURES AND POOLS CHECK

TODAY										NATIONWIDE LEAGUE										THIRD DIVISION										SECOND DIVISION										
3.0 unless stated										First Division										30 Colchester v Doncaster										49 Ayr v Stranraer										
FA Cup First Round										8 Barnsley v Gillingham										31 Doncaster v Fulham										Clyde v Brechin										
Liverpool	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts			9 Birmingham v QPR										32 Exeter v Cambridge Utd																				
1	7	5	0	2	10	7	18			10 Bolton v Stoke										33 Hartlepool v Chester																				
2	7	5	0	2	10	7	18			11 Charlton v Oldham										34 Lincoln v Cardiff																				
3	7	4	2	1	15	8	14			12 Crystal Palace v Southend										35 Mansfield v Hereford																				
4	7	4	0	0	16	8	24			13 Huddersfield v Reading										36 Northampton v Brighton																				
5	7	4	0	0	16	8	24			14 Norwich v Tannmer										37 Rochdale v Leyton Orient																				
6	7	4	0	0	16	8	24			15 Oxford Utd v Portsmouth										38 Scarborough v Wigan																				
7	7	4	0	0	16	8	24			16 Sheffield Utd v Manchester City										39 Southport v Barnet																				
8	7	4	0	0	16	8	24			17 West Bromwich v Ipswich										40 Torquay v Carlisle																				
										Second Division										Bell's Scottish League Premier Division																				
										18 Brentford v York										41 Dundee Utd v Aberdeen																				
										19 Bristol Rovers v Chesterfield										42 Durnferline v Raith																				
										20 Burnley v Bristol City										43 Hibernian v Hibernian																				
										21 Crewe v Plymouth										44 Motherwell v Hibernian																				
										22 Luton v Blackpool										45 Rangers v Celtic																				
										23 Notts County v Wrexham										First Division																				
										24 Peterborough v Wycombe										44 East Rife v Stranraer																				
										25 Preston v Millwall										45 Falkirk v Albion																				
										26 Rotherham v Bournemouth										46 Morton v St. Mirren																				
										27 Shrewsbury v Watford										47 Partick v Celtic																				
										28 Stockport v Gillingham										48 St. Johnstone v Dundee																				
										29 Walsley v Bury																														

No doddle for editor Venables who fails to land Hoddle

According to George Graham, when Terry Venables was a 19-year-old Chelsea starlet, "he always carried around this battered old typewriter on which he'd endlessly bash out articles". So perhaps El Tel was destined to try his hand at journalism, a profession for which he has been known to show (depending on the journalist) the sort of respect he reserves for managing directors of certain electronic companies.

Apart from (rather successfully) managing several football teams, during his 33 years, Venables has launched a tailor's shop, designed a wig, written a novel, created a TV detective series, sung in a dance group, pioneered the first plastic football pitch, devised a board game and written the script for *Euro 96* (even if the final chapter was an anticlimax). So you'd think editing a football magazine - in this case, the November issue of *FourFourTwo* - would be a

doddle for a man more used to making the headlines than writing them. But as Venables later admitted, "this was very different" - from the moment he walked through the doors of Haymarket Publishing's offices to be greeted with chants of "Ing-er-land, Ing-er-land, Ing-er-land" from the ad blokes on the ground floor who had draped a Union Jack out of the window in his honour. Venables simply smiled good-naturedly and began talking weather to the receptionist. Much to her chagrin, she had to ask him to sign the visitors' book. "It's the rules, no exceptions," she had been told; not even for a new signing who had created almost as much of a stir in suburban Teddington as Alan Shearer arriving on Tyneside.

I was to be his "shadow" while he was editor (which explains my sympathy for David Davies, who "shadowed" El Tel while he was England manager). Scribes, at home, Fratton Park - or on a car phone somewhere between the three - I had to vie for his attention with solicitors, book publishers (his latest tome was about to hit the streets) and assorted members of the press trying to get an angle on whether he wanted the Q&R job.

Don Howe told me: "Terry isn't a bang-bang-fists-on-the-table-kind-of-a-manager" - but I thought I'd discovered otherwise when we were discussing which four players to do in the "Boy's A Bit Special" section. Gary and Phil Neville, Sol Campbell and Jamie Redknapp were his choices. I suggested Nick Barmby, since his praise for the Middlesex striker seemed to know no bounds. "Let's have five then," says Venables. I explain we can only have four because of pagination. "I'm the editor. I want five," he retorts, thumping a fist on the table, before adding: "Only joking."

We knew he wouldn't come cheap; experts never do. We also knew he had imagination; after all, he had showed that as long ago as 1965 when Chelsea got a free-kick against Roma in the Fairs Cup. Venables started pacing 10 yards towards the wall, then after five paces round it and scored from the pass he received, which in those days was very innovative. We also knew - or thought we did - that the "man with the silver tongue" (as Irving Schuster described him) would easily be able to set up an interview for himself with (in order of his preference) Rinus Michels, Louis Van Gaal, Johan Cruyff, Glenn Hoddle, Kenny Dalglish or George Graham.

It didn't turn out to be as easy as we - or he - had expected. Michels said thanks but no thanks; he'd love an informal chat with Venables but did not fancy any publicity. Van Gaal had the small matter of Ajax's Champions' League meeting with Auxerre on his mind. Cruyff and Venables, meanwhile, met on TV duty at the Studio Delle Alpi. Cruyff agreed to the interview (over a glass of Chianti, I presume), but couldn't make the proposed day (and anyway, Venables had to be back in London to see Portsmouth play Wimbledon in the Coca-Cola Cup...).

Hoddle was in Copenhagen with - worryingly - Charles Hughes. Dalglish had already had more interview requests that week than the ex-Bishop Roderick Wright, and George Graham "would love to help" - but there was Darlington in the Coca-Cola Cup to think about. So you see, not even being Terry Venables opens every door.

So we ended up eating ham and cheese sandwiches in Scriven, listening to Venables pontificate on How to Win in Europe, which was probably better than anything the great and good of European football could have served up.

I still wonder whether his opening line to his *Euro 96* squad was the same one he used to kick off that first editorial meeting. "So who's in charge then," he enquired. "Er, you are," came the reply. "Right then," he declared, "let's get to work." But "work" wasn't quite like some members of the public seemed to imagine. He certainly didn't sit in the office, grappling with piles of proofs. Actually, it was probably more as he himself had imagined: "Fun, but hard work" (wasn't that what he said when he took over England?). Judging by his leader, you get the feeling he might not have found it quite so fun had he been working with certain tabloid hacks rather than *FourFourTwo*'s editorial staff. But it would have made exceedingly good copy.

Olivia Blair is Assistant Editor of *FourFourTwo* magazine



OLIVIA BLAIR

Thankfully, we only encountered this problem once more, when he wanted to write the longest leader in magazine publishing history. But the leader had been 350 words long for the past two and a half years; it couldn't change for "Mister Wonderful" (as they christened him at Barcelona) or anyone else.

Arsenal set to go top of the table

When Arsène Wenger perused Arsenal's position this week and in his best Jim Callaghan manner queried "Criss, what criss?" you could see his point. True, he did not know the team he is to manage was about to go out of the Uefa Cup, although he probably suspected it, but in League terms at least the club look to be in the rudest form of health.

A club with the classic ingredients for relegation - internal strife and an ageing back four - find themselves in third place in the Premiership this morning and if they defeat Sunderland at Highbury today they will go to the top, albeit until Liverpool and Newcastle play tomorrow and Monday respectively.

The last time the Gunners topped the League was 7 November 1992 and in the interim they have jettisoned two managers and had enough drugs and drink stories to keep

for a month with damaged knee ligaments is a significant setback. It has not taken Rudi Guttlit long to sound like a manager. When the Dutch master assumed control at Stamford Bridge last summer the talk was of beautiful football, a concept reinforced by the signings of Frank Leboeuf, Gianluca Vialli and Roberto Di Matteo. Two heavy defeats to Liverpool and Blackpool in a week, however, and his language was pure Tommy Docherty.

"It's not enough to have only quality," Guttlit said as his team prepared to meet Nottingham Forest. "You have to combine it with passion and the will to win the game. If you don't have passion you can't perform." He will be yelling at Leboeuf to "put it in the mixer" next.

Which is something Everton, who face Sheffield Wednesday at Goodison, have never been afraid to do under Joe Royle, particularly when Duncan Ferguson is doing the mixing. This makes the injury to the Scottish striker particularly unfortunate because the mood is changing on Merseyside if the radio talk shows with supporters are anything to go by.

Suddenly the manager is being questioned which is extraordinary considering that one and a half matches into the season they had beaten Newcastle and were 2-0 up against Manchester United at Old Trafford. Since then their season has plummeted to the point they are without a win in eight matches and were knocked out of the Coca-Cola Cup by York on Tuesday.

Wednesday have that sinking feeling they are following up four successive wins that took them to the top of the Premiership with five matches without a victory. They also have fitness amenities with David Hirst and Mark Pemberton out and several others doubtful.

Their problems pale into insignificance, however, in comparison to Coventry and Blackburn, who might have hoped to be involved in a six-pointer at this stage of the season given their financial outlay over the last two years but did not expect to have the word relegation prefixed to it.

British trio's chance

PHIL SHAW

The trio of British survivors in Europe's lesser club competitions missed out on the more glamorous names on offer in Geneva yesterday, receiving instead assignments against middle-ranking opponents with equal potential for progress and embarrassment.

Both representatives in the Uefa Cup drew clubs who won their national sides, Newcastle being paired with Ferencvaros of Budapest, and Aberdeen tackling Brondby of Copenhagen. Liverpool, eliminated by the Danes at the same stage last year, now meet Switzerland's Sion in the Cup-Winners' Cup.

Newcastle have arguably the easiest of the ties. Hungary are in demand in the build-up to *Euro 96* as fodder for teams like England who needed a big, morale-boosting win, while Ferencvaros suffered heavy reverses against Ajax and Real Madrid in last season's Champions' League.

Having beaten off the domestic challenge of BVS-C Dreher, whose subsequent defeat by Barry provided a revealing snapshot of Hungarian standards, Ferencvaros lost to IFK Gothenburg in the qualifying round for this season's Champions' League.

Liverpool, bidding to become the fifth club to win all three Continental competitions, will encounter four of Switzerland's squad in England this summer. Peter Robinson, the Anfield club's chief executive, said: "The one thing we won't do is underestimate Sion. When we drew Brondby last season, most people thought we'd win, and we did not."

Brondby, like Ferencvaros, had hoped to be involved in something more lucrative this autumn. Trailing 2-1 to Widzew Lodz from the Polish leg of their Champions' League qualifier, they led 3-0 before being pulled back to 2-2 in the last minute and losing on away goals. However, their 7-0 aggregate success against Aarau suggests Aberdeen will need to defend better than against Barry, with whom they drew 3-3 in midweek.

The Cup-Winners' Cup also threw up a collision of two European champions of the '90s: Barcelona and Red Star Belgrade. The Serbs' resurgence continued with a 4-0 rout of Kaiserslautern on Thursday.

Gibbs, who has returned to play for Swansea this season, seems certain to take over from Nigel Davies in the centre alongside Leigh Davies although Dafydd James has also been included. The 25-year-old won 20 caps for Wales before switching to rugby league with St Helens.

So the Athletic Ground becomes the stage for the All-Pro show. The shapes of the present and the future will slog it out for win bonuses and try to justify the cash being spent on them.

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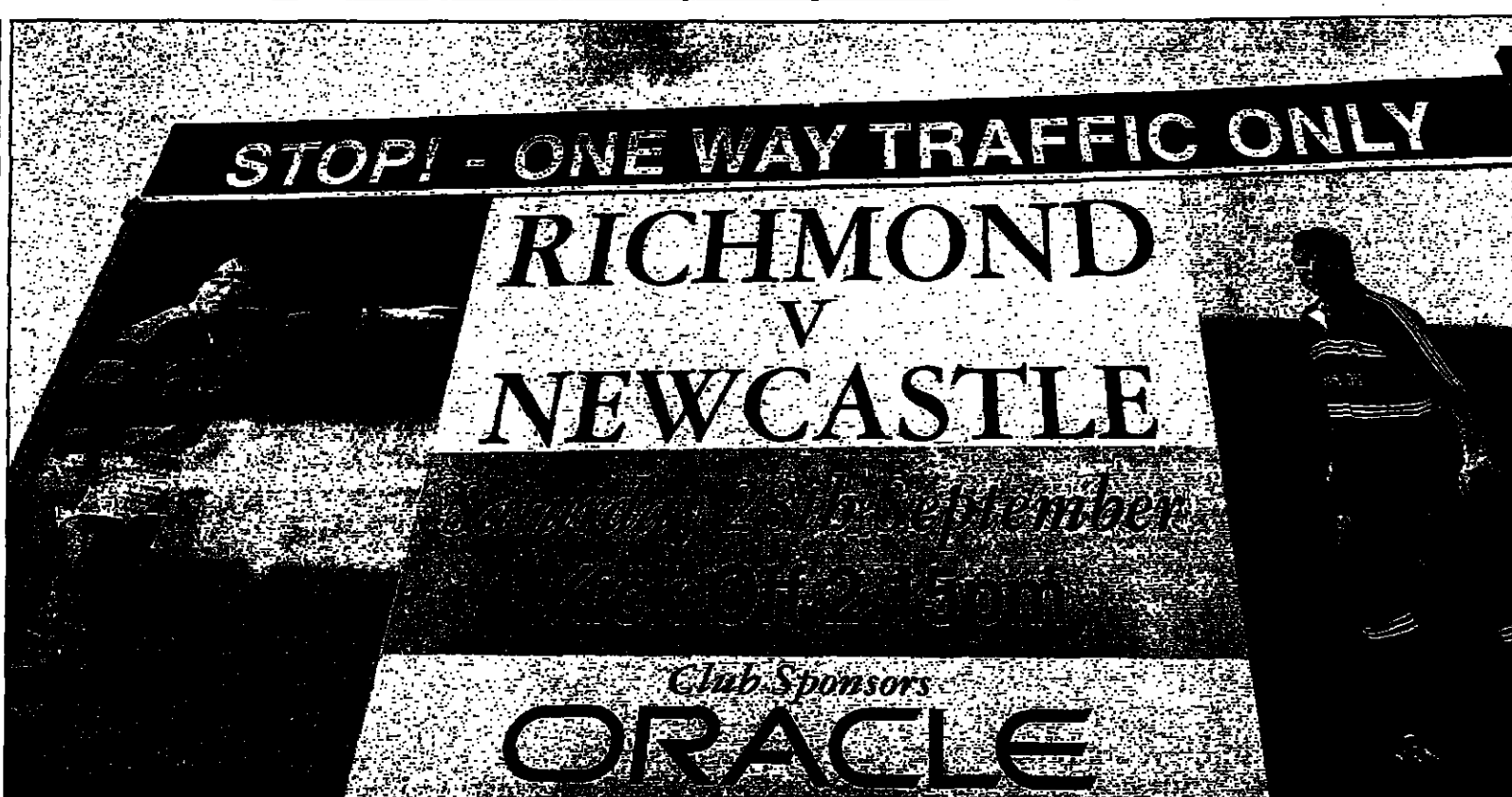
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Show on the road: Brian Moore (left) and Rob Andrew advertise today's encounter on a Richmond roadside Photograph: Peter Jay

Money men on show at Richmond

The professional rugby circus is in town. Fly posters along the A316 depicting a pit bull against a fly boy announce it brazenly enough. But in case anyone was in any doubt, the tented village that has sprung up at Richmond is conclusive enough. It may be the Second Division but Richmond against Newcastle eclipses all other Courage League confrontations today.

The pictures on the posters are of Brian Moore and Rob Andrew, but they could just as easily be of the clubs' millionaire backers Ashley Levett and Sir John Hall.

This is the cheque book challenge. Today will give the first indications of what the big money has bought. The match throws together 16 internationals - eight per team - in the two clubs who were most active in recruiting.

But the acquisition of such star-studded line-ups begs a question: what happened to the class of 95-96 in each club? A lot have stayed on. But in Newcastle's case around 20 packed their bags and reformed Gosforth RFC. Their new ground, Bullocksteads, is

much that they do not want to be full-time professional rugby players. They already have careers outside the game. One young player, who wished to remain anonymous, said: "A lot of us have joined clubs where we can maintain a high standard of rugby and hold down a career at the same time. I don't know of anyone who is unhappy at what has happened at Richmond."

So the Athletic Ground becomes the stage for the All-Pro show. The shapes of the present and the future will slog it out for win bonuses and try to justify the cash being spent on them.

Carling set to fulfil dream by playing as Quins stand-off

Will Carling is hoping to make his debut at stand-off for Harlequins, the League leaders, at third-placed Northampton today, writes David Llewellyn.

Paul Challenor, Quins' regular stand-off, suffered an elbow injury during England's midweek training and yesterday pulled out of the vital Courage First Division match.

Challenor will travel to Franklin's Gardens in the hope that the injury will have cleared up, but it does not look promising.

There is an interesting family confrontation at Edge Hall Road where the Tugmalala brothers Va'ega (Wasps) and Lusa (Orrell) meet. Orrell also expect Frano Botica, who is being chased by Llanelli, to turn out for them, despite reports that he is still struggling to recover from a shoulder injury. Llanelli, meanwhile, have admitted that Botica cannot play for them at Pontypridd, despite agreeing a deal with Botica's rugby league club, Castleford.

Scott Gibbs has returned to Welsh union colours after his spell in rugby league with a place in a 21-strong squad for their trip to Rome to play Italy on 5 October.

Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, has delayed announcing the side because of injuries picked up by several players during Wednesday's 40-33 defeat by France. Ieuan Evans and Nigel Davies are definitely out and there is a doubt about No 8 Steve Williams.

Britain may stage Lewis' title fight

BOADING

Lemmy Lewis could make his bid to regain the World Boxing Council heavyweight crown in Britain. Although Don King won the rights for the fight, the American promoter may decide to stage the contest for the vacant title between Lewis and Oliver McColl in England.

"King has got seven days to tell us where he intends to stage the fight," Panos Elaidis, Lewis' promoter, said yesterday. "The only chance he has of making any money is to bring the fight to England."

King's original intention was to stage the fight on the undercard of the Mike Tyson fight in Las Vegas on 9 November. However, Elaidis believes that McColl will probably need more time to get fit. "A more likely date is 6 December," Elaidis said.

Frank Warren has been forced to postpone next Tuesday's promotion at the Moorways Leisure Centre in Derby. He has been unable to arrange a replacement title fight after Burton's Neville Brown was forced to pull out of his European Championship challenge against Alexander Zaitsev because of a back injury.

Alex Zaitsev is the hot favourite to win his first Tour of Spain this weekend after defeating the overall leader's yellow jersey yesterday's 20th stage, which was won in the style by Gianni Bugno. Zaitsev retains a lead of more than four minutes over Laurent Dufaux, with Roberto Piestre a further three minutes back in yesterday's 20th stage. Neither of the two remaining stages is likely to pose much difficulty to Zaitsev. Today's 244km time trial is one of his specialties, while tomorrow's final stage in Madrid is expected to be decided in a sprint finish.

West Bromwich Albion have signed the Grimsby Town goalkeeper Paul Chilton for £250,000, after a spell on loan at the Hawthorns.

Scotland's League Second Division club Clyde have appointed Gordon Spence as their new manager, after a spell in charge as caretaker.

Bruce Grobbelaar, now Zimbabwe's joint coach, has picked himself to play against Scotland in Harrogate tomorrow in an east African international tournament. The Plymouth Argyle goalkeeper had been dropped by his predecessor as captain, Marc Dowling.

Barcelona's cup-winning goalkeeper Claudio G. Lopez has been named in the squad for the UEFA Cup Second-round clash Dynamo Tbilisi in Georgia. Lopez is a Valencia player who has been loaned to Barcelona.

BRITISH NATIONAL DRESSAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS (Aldershot, Dorset): FEI Prix St Georges 1. Danielle O'Hall (GB) 67.25 per cent; 2. Rieger (GB) 67.25 per cent; 3. Neysa (GB) 65.00 per cent. FEI Freestyle 1. Danielle O'Hall (GB) 68.54 per cent; 2. Rieger (GB) 68.54 per cent; 3. Neysa (GB) 68.54 per cent.

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Oakland 7 Seattle 5; Boston 5 New York Yankees 2; Toronto 1 Baltimore 4; Texas 6 California 5.

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Cincinnati 12 Chicago Cubs 4; Houston 6 New York Mets 2; Philadelphia 7 Atlanta 3; Los Angeles 5 San Francisco 6.

BASEBALL: Thursday's late results: Mets 5 San Diego Padres 4; Yankees 7 Boston 2; Braves 4 Philadelphia 3; Cardinals 6 St Louis 3; Pirates 4 Cincinnati 2; Reds 3 Houston 2; Astros 4 Texas 3; Rangers 5 Oakland 2; Athletics 3 Los Angeles 1; Giants 4 San Francisco 3.

FOOTBALL: France 30-year-old Aston Villa and former Nottingham Forest winger, is having a trial with the Italian Serie A club, Reggina.

The former Manchester United, Arsenal and Republic of Ireland centre-forward Frank Stapleton has resigned after only nine months as head coach of New England Revolution, who finished bottom of the Major League Soccer (MLS) table.

THE FORMER MANCHESTER UNITED, ARSENAL AND REPUBLIC OF IRELAND CENTRE-FORWARD FRANK STAPLETON HAS RESIGNED AFTER ONLY NINE MONTHS AS HEAD COACH OF NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION, WHO FINISHED BOTTOM OF THE MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER (MLS) TABLE.

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FANTASY FOOTBALL

Check your scores every Wednesday and Sunday and watch out for our first transfer period, coming soon

PHILIPS
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THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

SPORT



'I DON'T HAVE THE PROBLEMS HERE I WOULD HAVE IN ENGLAND'
Bobby Robson talks to Glenn Moore about life at the top in Spain Page 24

Gascoigne's extraordinary life on video

Football
ADAM SZRETER

A predictable chorus of disapproval was rising towards fever pitch in the tabloid press last night as details were released of a new documentary from the people who gave the world the Graham Taylor's catchphrase "Do I not like that?"

Chrysalis Productions, who made a name for themselves with the fly-on-the-wall film about Taylor's ill-fated reign as England manager, somehow managed to persuade "the most famous man in Britain," otherwise known as Paul Gascoigne, to be the subject of similar scrutiny, recording a year in his life from when he returned from Lazio in Italy to sign for Rangers.

Judging from the transcript, *Gascoigne's Coming Home* should make fascinating viewing for football fans everywhere, but Gascoigne is going to have to put up with some familiar criticism, concentrating mainly on his remarks in the film about drinking, given the recent revelations of England's Euro 96 captain, Tony Adams, concerning his alcoholism.

The worst of it appears to be in answer to a question about whether British clubs encourage players to drink to improve team spirit. "I would say that definitely," Gascoigne replies. "We certainly do that at Rangers. You know if everything's going well they keep you out on the drink and, er, get drunk for a couple of days, and er, we go to the races or we have a game of golf. And that does keep the spirit together."

The thought of the Rangers players getting drunk for a couple of days does indeed boggle the mind, and is likely to have the gossip-mongers hard at it for a while but, if it is accepted that the Scottish champions of the past eight years are not likely to be a bunch of alcoholics, there are passages of greater interest.

Soon after Gascoigne joined Rangers he naively acquiesced to a request from the supporters by playing an imaginary flute in the style of "The Sash," the Loyalist anthem which is the Rangers' fans' favourite way to offend their rivals from Celtic.

"I waved to them. I didn't know what it meant, and one of the other guys - I'm not gonna drop him in it - um, Ian Ferguson, said um, he said it's that. So, um, I said, oh, that's right, so I just went like that. And the - the, um - they gave a roar. So I didn't think - no one said anything about it, I didn't know anything about it."

"I scored the goal. I've done the old action, and er - after that it was just unbelievable. People were actually going barmy... You know one guy - one guy just stopped his car and he just looked and he said 'Gazza', he said 'er, you just watch what you're doing up here, be careful, mate. And I went 'oh, alright, cheers mate'. I thought it was... and he went, because I'll slash your effing throat. Oh - and er I mean the training session didn't go too well that day..."

Wright to explain attack on Pleat

The Football Association has confirmed that it will ask Ian Wright, the Arsenal striker, for his comments after an extraordinary attack on the Sheffield Wednesday manager, David Pleat.

Wright reportedly branded Pleat a "perv" after the Wednesday manager protested to the FA over two alleged incidents involving Wright in the recent Premiership game at Highbury, which the Gunners won 4-1.

Pleat called for an inquiry after Wright pulled the dreadlocks of Wednesday's Regi Blinker and allegedly stamped on the Yugoslav defender, Dejan Stefanovic. The FA said: "We are writing to Ian Wright asking for his observations on the reported comments in today's papers."

Wright is quoted in yesterday's *Daily Mail* as saying: "He [David Pleat] can do what he likes. He can report me to the FA, but I just don't care. Why is he doing it? But if I do have to appear at the FA, I'll have my say about David Pleat. He's a perv - and you can print that."

Wright was referring to newspaper revelations nine years ago that Pleat was cautioned by police three times for kerb-crawling. The publicity forced him to resign as Tottenham manager. Pleat said yesterday: "Ian has been misled. His words aren't worthy of comment."

Joe Royle, the Everton manager, has been charged with bringing the game into disrepute by the FA, following comments he made to the referee David Elleray last weekend in the match against Blackburn after the dismissal of Duncan Ferguson.

Fred Reacher, the chairman of Nottingham Forest, will step down if moves to take over the club go ahead. The Forest board has met to discuss approaches made from potential buyers, and Reacher said: "I would have no hesitation personally in stepping down if the right deal could be struck. I am looking for sufficient capital coming into the club for us to keep pace with the Manchester Uniteds and Liverpools of this world."

Tottenham have taken the Italian defender Luca Lazzeri on a six-week trial from Brescia, but he is only allowed to play in friendly matches while Gerry Francis, the Spurs manager, decides whether to meet his £600,000 valuation.

Hill snubs Jordan and joins Arrows

Motor racing
DAVID TREMAYNE

Damon Hill, who is poised to win the Formula One world championship next month, announced last night that he will drive next year for the Arrows team, which has failed to win a single grand prix in its 18-year history.

Speaking in the London hotel where only weeks earlier he had revealed his controversial sacking by the Williams-Renault team, Hill left pundits in a state of disbelief when he announced that his new employers will be a team whose best result dates back to 1988, when they finished third in the Italian Grand Prix.

Arrows are understood to have agreed to pay Hill \$6m (£3.8m) to drive for them next season. Hill denied suggestions that he was taking a backward step in joining the Arrows team, which was bought by Tom Walkinshaw in July. "Tom is the archetypal race driver and team owner, a man I and others credit with turning round the fortunes of the Benetton team," he said. "He is the head of a successful international engineering team. He has offered me a truly rewarding package. It's a great challenge. Everything this man does and touches becomes a winner, and right now I am feeling very excited."

Following the announcement of his split with Williams, Hill's options had become fewer and fewer as the leading teams confirmed their line-ups for next year. The smart money had been on his driving for Jordan, although Jackie Stewart, who returns to Formula One with a new team next season, was also thought to be in contention. Jordan were understood to be offering Hill a similar deal to the one he has agreed with Arrows, although Stewart was almost certainly unable to match that offer.

Hill said he had been highly impressed after visiting TWR's

headquarters at Leaffield near Oxford and viewing facilities that are second only to Williams'. He added: "Nobody is under any illusion over the task ahead. Winning in Formula One is not easy. But I was left in no doubt that the package and facilities Tom has are the beginnings of what I believe will be a winning team."

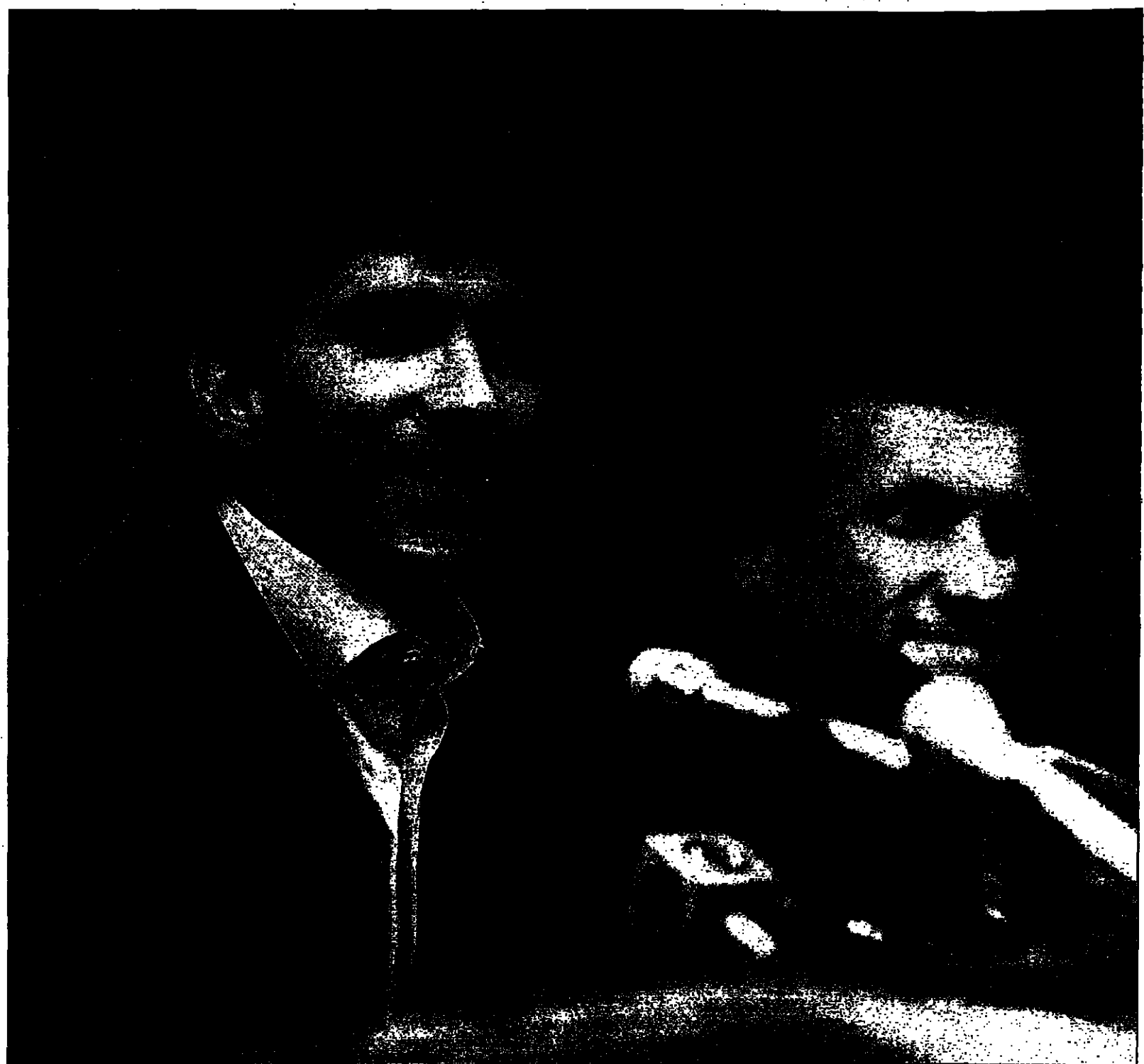
Hill's deal is for one year and is not dependent on his winning the world championship at the Japanese Grand Prix next month. Hill has only to finish in the first six places at Suzuka to guarantee winning the title. He declined to give any timescale for his victory aspirations with TWR.

For Walkinshaw, chairman of the TWR Group, the move to recruit Hill is entirely logical, and a tribute to his incisiveness. "I have been pretty impressed with what I have seen of Damon's driving, and I have always wanted a top-flight driver to lead this team," he said.

For Hill the reasons are less clear. Arrows as a team has been remarkable only for its failure to win a single grand prix since its birth in 1978.

Walkinshaw, a 50-year-old Scot, purchased a controlling interest in the team this summer from its founder, Jackie Oliver. Walkinshaw's record is one of success mixed with the occasional controversy. Tom Walkinshaw Racing (TWR) has been victorious in touring car and sports car racing, with manufacturers such as Jaguar, Rover, Mazda and Volvo. Its Silk Cut Jaguars won the World Sportscar Championship, and twice triumphed in the Le Mans 24 Hour endurance classic. His efforts as engineering director at Benetton helped the Winery-based team to win world championships with Michael Schumacher in 1994 and again in 1995.

Arrows' performance has not picked up noticeably since the takeover, but Walkinshaw has been concentrating on 1997



Damon Hill (left) and Tom Walkinshaw, the team owner, at yesterday's announcement that Hill is joining Arrows next season

Photograph: Robert Hallam

rather than wasting money investing in the existing car. The move to TWR is also likely to mean that Hill will switch from the Goodyear tyres, on which he has enjoyed his 20 grands prix victories, to the untried Japanese Bridgestone brand which is expected to come into Formula One next season after a prolonged series of tests this year. It is thought that Bridgestone's willingness to stump up the money cemented the deal with Hill.

Walkinshaw, a natural gambler, said: "I think you have to evaluate the potential of things and then take a decision, and I value the potential of Bridgestone. It's enormous. We've worked with them for 10 years on road tyres and in touring car racing in Australia, so we are familiar with their engineering people and their capabilities. I don't think it's a big risk and I think there's big potential in it."

Walkinshaw is expected to confirm the deal in Suzuka in two weeks' time. He is also expected to announce that his cars will be fitted with the Yamaha V10 engine used this season by Tyrrell, and that his own impressive engine department will assist Williams in its development.

Frank Williams announced last month that he had signed the German driver, Heinz-Harald Frentzen, to partner Jacques Villeneuve in 1997. Williams has not given any official reason for dropping Hill, but he is believed to have entertained long-term concerns over his ability to tackle Schumacher in a competitive Ferrari on equal terms. It has been suggested, however, that Williams' antipathy towards Hill's manager, Michael Breen, influenced his decision.

Jordan appeared to be Hill's most logical option once it became clear that Jean Alesi could not be prised from his Benetton contract at anything approaching a sensible cost. But Jordan had one serious problem for Hill: the presence of Michael Schumacher's younger brother, Ralf, as confirmed driver of the second car. Dialogue with Jordan had nevertheless been progressing until Wednesday, when suddenly the lines to Jordan's Silverstone base went dead.

WALK FOR WILDLIFE



Phillip Schofield says, "How can going for a walk at your local beauty spot help save endangered wildlife around the world?"

"It's simple if you join WWF's Walk for Wildlife on Sunday 13 October." There are over 250 walks taking place around the UK, and there is one near you. Ring now for a sponsor form and details of your local walks.

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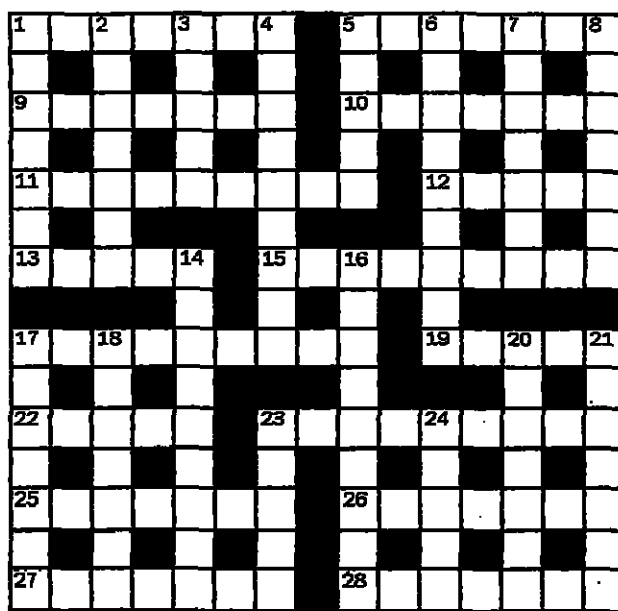
THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3104, Saturday 28 September

By Phil

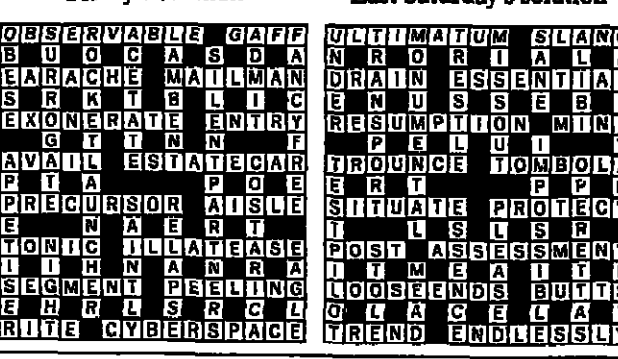
ACROSS

DOWN



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution



- 1 Food supplier, English, remains in first place (3-4)
- 5 Improbable horse? Wise man keeps back in the matter (7)
- 9 "Bpica, cold, fool's given to get (7)
- 10 "Neater" martinet, losing head, ordered (7)
- 11 The lid's the lid, and no arguments! (5, 4)
- 12 Greeting, one - look! - provided by a couple of Hawaiians (5)
- 13 Strength is returning? Unprecedented (5)
- 15 Aged movie repackaged as more modern entertainment (5, 4)
- 17 Cheers copper in fights with leader of revolt (9)
- 19 They may be used to warn children about love (5)
- 22 Recalled some granulated material from the moon may be described thus (5)
- 23 Took action, seeing uproar on plain (7, 2)
- 25 Every one of the elderly will accept it completely (3, 4)
- 26 Here's an opening, if investing in gold reserve (7)
- 27 German town gets Community backing, in substance (7)
- 28 Stormy sea for last of those from Atlantic islands (7)

- 1 Roman historian's account - it attracts us after a little time (7)
- 2 Refrain from thanks - sailor's wrong accepting that (7)
- 3 Man, when seizing power, has lots (5)
- 4 Ruin plans for theatrical chance? (4, 5)
- 5 Source of wine provides nothing in a beer (5)
- 6 Travels and finds a fight? (4, 5)
- 7 Go round Australia with a philosopher (7)
- 8 Unexpectedly run into identical item in roll-call? (7)
- 14 Reduce power of book, removing appearance of ship (5, 4)
- 16 Frustrate Labourite, ultimately - remove Left without delay (6, 3)
- 17 Rescue student in grip of fierce attacker (7)
- 18 Ring to cancel our appearance? (7)
- 20 Ancient dead man found in excavation in Bow? (3-4)
- 21 Heartfelt offence with hesitation accepted by church (7)
- 23 Plant is on verge (5)
- 24 Former Christian leader (5)

The first five correct solutions in this week's puzzle opened and Thursday receive hand-drawn copies of the new Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday, brief solutions in Saturday Crossword, E.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Leadenhall Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3JL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: Bernard Cole, Liverpool; Tim Vile, Woodbridge; D. Southwick, Horne Bay; D. Morris, Bury St Edmunds; P. Miles, Cardiff.

In tomorrow's Independent on Sunday

"Both are known at their clubs, Liverpool and West Ham, by their first names, not only because everyone gets on with them but because, ironically, given their business, their second names are unpronounceable. Boris works with Patrick Berger, Amedeu mainly with Paulo Futre, but also with Florin Raducioiu, Ilie Dumitrescu, Slaven Bilic and anyone else at the club who fancies a natter."

In tomorrow's Independent on Sunday, Andrew Baker translates the thoughts of the interpreters who are increasingly talking a good game in the Premiership this season. Plus: The 52-year-old who should be athlete of the year. Tales of the families left behind by Round the World yacht crews. Sue Montgomery on the race of the season at Ascot. Ian Ridley on the blossoming of David Beckham. Simon O'Hagan on Liverpool's Dominic effect.

In Monday's 20-page sports section
Reports and analysis from a big weekend of sporting action

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